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GERALDINE OF DESMOND,

- OR

I R E L A N D

IN THE

REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

“ Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who work'd his wantonness in form of law;
Long war without, and frequent broil within,
Had made a path for blood and giant sin.

* * * * *

They waited but a leader, and they found
One to their cause inseparably bound.”

LORD BYRON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

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LONDON :
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

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GERALDINE OF DESMOND.

CHAPTER I.

“ Virtue may be assail’d, but never hurt,
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthrall’d :
Yea—even that which mischief meant most harm
Shall, in the happy trial, prove most glory,
And evil on itself shall back recoil.”

MILTON.

“ Quel trouble soudain
Me glace a cet objet, et fait trembler ma main ?
Moi ! un Prêtre !”

“ In my grave I ’scape
All those affronts, which I in life must look for.

* * * * *

Each single scorn would be far worse than dying;
Besides, I ’scape the stings of my own conscience.”

LEE.

“ ’Twas his own voice, she could not err ;
Throughout the breathing world’s extent
There was but one such voice for her,
So kind, so soft, so eloquent !”

LALLA ROOKH.

THE grey shadows of evening were beginning to
steal over the face of the heavens, when Lord Thurles

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recovered from the deathlike stupor produced by the exertions he had undergone, and which had fallen on his senses like a spell that enchained their powers. This temporary suspension of thought and feeling had been artificially prolonged by a strong narcotic, which the Viscount had been forced to swallow ; and when, after a lapse of some hours, perception returned, he felt, in the renovation of his strength, the beneficial effects of the medicine that had been administered. The moment of restored consciousness was fraught with the acutest apprehensions, for the all-engrossing object of his soul—Geraldine in danger—rose to Thurles's memory with the distinctness of a frightful reality. At this thought the Viscount started from his couch, flung on his helm and sword, and flew from his tent. The leech who watched beside him had not had time to offer a single remonstrance, so rapid was the action of our hero. Rushing to that part of the camp where he knew his men were quartered, Lord Thurles quickly reached it. About twenty of his soldiers lay listlessly on the ground, after having enjoyed the refreshments of sleep and food. They started at the appearance of their officer, for the colour of death was on his cheek, and his eyes shot forth fire as the words, " Follow in silence !" passed his

lips. In an instant every hand was lifted up, for the soldiers grasped their arms and eagerly obeyed the call, conceiving that they were either going to surprise the enemy, or were chosen for some secret and important enterprise, which should crown them with immortal honour. Not a voice, and scarcely a sound was heard, while they followed the rapid movements of their leader. He crossed an angle of the camp, and having passed the plain beyond, led up the steep ascent on whose rocky brow O'Brien's Cross was visible.

In a dreary silence, which harmonized with the desolate character of the surrounding scene, the party pursued their way up the mountain, amid the fragments of rock and moss-covered stones that were strewn on its side. When he came within a short distance of the cross, Lord Thurles, motioning to his soldiers to remain stationary, sprung forward alone, laid his hand on the shaft of the monument, and threw a scrutinizing look around. "O'Donnell!" the next moment burst from him in a tone that issued deeply on the silence of the night.

"Is here," replied a figure, which slowly crept from behind the cross, where it had lain concealed. At first the stealthy pace was like that of a man who dreaded his own shadow; but having looked

anxiously about, Murtoch O'Donnell, for it was he, instantly assumed a bolder air, as rising from the ground he stood erect before Lord Thurles.

"Lead on!" was the Viscount's brief command.

"'Tis myself has waited long for—"

"Show on the path, and speak not.—Soldiers, advance!" cried Lord Thurles. His troop came forward. Instinctively swayed by that power which great minds wield over inferior ones, and awed by the appearance of the military, O'Donnell obeyed his Lordship's order, and the next moment our hero and his men were in rapid motion, as they followed their desperate guide over tracts of gloom, of which fancy might have hailed him as the wild, unhallowed spirit.

Descending the other side of the mountain, the party passed through a sterile valley, that led into a narrow winding glen. Its bed was filled with large fragments of rock. These had fallen from the jutting summits of towering crags, that projected overhead so closely as only partially to admit the beams of a full moon that had just risen, and which darted an imperfect light through the trees that hung on the brinks of the precipices that frowned on either side of this desolate ravine.

For some time the soldiers perseveringly pur-

sued their toilsome way through the furzy thickets, masses of stone, and tangled underwood, that lay along their path.

Not a word was uttered, as with drawn swords the men followed their leader through the solitary pass, which now gradually descended, until the declivity increased so considerably, that it became a service of difficulty and danger to clamber down its shelving sides. At length the little band reached the bottom, and emerged from the mysterious gloom through which they had lately groped their way. Lord Thurles, who had intently watched the movements of O'Donnell, and had kept as close to him as possibility allowed, now advanced still nearer, and unable any longer to control his feelings, impatiently exclaimed:—

“How long are we to wander thus?—Where is—”

“Husht! husht! if you would presarve her life!”—cried O'Donnell in an agony of alarm.—“The gould—gimme the gould, an' I will show you where she is this blessed minute.”

“Where?—where?”

“The money first—and thin—”

“Sirrah! I have it not!” said Thurles, so agitated that he could scarcely articulate the words.

“Gimme that ring, an' sorrow more I 'll axe,”

whispered O'Donnell, pointing to a valuable brilliant which the Viscount wore.

" 'Tis yours !" exclaimed Thurles, tearing the jewel from his finger ; " now, show me the place—or—"

" *There !*" said Murtoch, pointing to a zig-zag path that wound up the side of a bold chain of perpendicular cliffs which ran entirely across the open glade on which the party stood. In the clear moonlight all objects could be distinguished plainly ; and on Thurles's eye following the direction that had been given, he perceived half-way up the precipice a mass of partially dilapidated buildings, which seemed to have been shattered either by the rage of the mountain storms, or by the desolating hand of time.

" On—on !" said Thurles, in a quick, low voice.

" By my conscience, I daren't," returned O'Donnell in the same under-tone ; " but I'll ingage I'll watch over ye in secret, and if yees bate the boys, 'tis myself will guide ye and the Saxon sodgiers back. Spake not a word good or bad, but go on *quite* to the ruins. The road's *forenent* ye !"

These words were scarcely breathed, when O'Donnell, with the fleetness of a startled deer, ran up the rocks which he had just descended, and rushed into

the deep obscurity of a recess where light had never penetrated. Remonstrance or pursuit would have been equally fruitless, therefore Thurles was compelled to trust entirely to his own resources.

A thin stream of torchlight darted through one of the long narrow window-frames of the undemolished front of what appeared to be an ancient chapel, the ivied walls of which stood close to a dilapidated castle. This ray was a beacon to Lord Thurles, who, turning to his men, laid the forefinger of his left hand on his lip, and waved his sword-arm towards the ruins. The signal was understood, and obeyed. Rapidly, and in profound silence, the Viscount led his soldiers up a steep and narrow path, until he reached what had once been a massive wall, and which, though now partly fallen, still formed a sort of outer-work to the old castle and chapel, that rose immediately behind it. Stationing his men within the shadow of this strong bulwark, Lord Thurles gave a signal for absolute silence. Scarcely had he done so, when the total stillness which had reigned was broken by low, continuous whisperings, that issued from the chapel overhead. A scream as shrill as that of the bird of the desert, the next instant smote on the ear, as it rose with horrible distinctness above a murmur of suppressed sounds. With a vigour of

mind adequate to its trial, Thurles instantly conceived the course he should pursue. Whispering a brief command to his soldiers to remain as still as death, until the order was revoked, his Lordship advanced alone, and cautiously began to scale the broken wall.

With a noiseless step he adroitly passed from fragment to fragment, until he stood on the top of the wall immediately beneath the narrow window through which the stream of light still issued. Balancing himself on one foot, the Viscount raised the other to a projecting buttress, and then firmly grasping the knotted branches of the old ivy which mantled the outside of the chapel, he gradually coiled up his figure, and trusting to a support that seemed unequal to sustain his weight, leaned forward, until, though screened from discovery by the spreading ivy, he was able to look into the interior of the sanctuary. His situation was one of imminent peril; but regardless of personal danger, Thurles fixed a maddened gaze on the scene that burst upon his view, with an effect which was electrical.

Fronting the high altar of the chapel knelt the Lady Geraldine. Her head was bent so low, that her long tresses swept the ground, and in clustering luxuriance overspread and totally concealed

her features. Her figure was rigid and motionless as the marble monument round which her arms were clasped. Nature seemed to have sunk beneath a weight of agony, and a quick and shortened respiration was the only evidence which proved that the powers of life and suffering had not passed away together. A throng of wild and armed men upheld some lighted branches of the pine, which shot their flickering flames on every side. Close to the kneeling figure of the Lady Geraldine, the Chief of Ulster stood, armed and accoutred in his military garb. His eyes glared fierceness as they glanced around. His face worked with the passions which were rushing through his soul, and his voice assumed an accent of hellish power, when turning to a venerable-looking priest of the Dominican order, whose flowing beard of silvery whiteness swept the open missal which he held at the altar, O'Nial, through gnashing teeth, called forth the word—"Proceed!"—while bending a knee to the earth, he attempted to seize the hand of Geraldine.

Making one last desperate effort, the daughter of the Desmond half-upraised her form, flung back her hair, looked wildly round as if she scarcely could believe the terrors which she felt, shook off the grasp of the O'Nial, and shrieking

out—"Be *his*!—No—never!" dropped senseless on the pavement.

This scene had passed with the rapidity of lightning. The agitation of our hero for an instant, but an instant only, quelled the powers of thought. Fortitude returned, and with it came that firmness which great minds can command. Thurles cast a piercing look around, and scanned with an instantaneous glance the distance from the chapel and the obstacles to his reaching it. He saw the measures which were necessary to give success to his design, and having done so, took his resolution. To leap from the rampart wall, to stand beside his men, and to whisper the object of his enterprise, was the work of a moment. With a gesture which enjoined both wariness and silence, the Viscount advanced towards a craggy path that wound about the outer-works of the ruins, and cautiously led his soldiers up the gorge of the mountain-pass. Clearing every impediment, the men pressed on as silently as possible, until they reached, without discovery or accident, a low and broken arch, beyond which a circuitous vaulted passage appeared. Lord Thurles suddenly stopped, looked back upon the windings of the mountain track, and scrutinized the place, as if uncertain whether to advance. But after the hesitation of a moment,

with a look of stern determination, he whispered to his men to "follow," and boldly walked into the passage. The intrepid soldiers obeyed the voice of their leader, and with stealthy footsteps but undaunted hearts silently threaded their way, two by two, along the obscure avenue, which they entered at all hazards. As they proceeded, their path gradually widened, and suddenly a quivering gush of light fell upon the darkness which had involved the party since they entered the passage. Looking upwards, Thurles saw that it was no longer overarched, and that on the now roofless avenue the moon, as if to guide him to success, poured down her brightest beams. They encouraged our hero and his men to press rapidly forward. Every object was again revealed by the glorious planet which shone in the distant sky; and on turning a sudden angle, the party, to their inexpressible delight, found themselves issuing out on a level green-sward, upon the brow of the mountain, and within a short distance of the entrance to the chapel. Our hero turned an eye, that seemed instinct with fire, on his men, and pointing his sword towards the gate, he, with his soldiers, rushed to its worm-eaten planks, and struck against them with such force, that they gave way with a loud crash, high above which rose the

voice of Thurles, as he shouted forth,—“On, soldiers, to the rescue, or to death!” and burst into the centre of the chapel.

“Death let it be!” fiercely broke from the O’Nial, when with eyes starting from their sockets with surprise and rage, he drew his skein, and made a furious pass at Thurles, who, parrying the stroke, seized his rival’s sword-arm with a giant’s grasp, while he exclaimed,—

“Yield up my love! for, by the God of Heaven, I will rescue her, or perish!”

The storm which shook O’Nial almost precluded utterance. But putting forth his whole strength, he vociferated, in a voice that sounded like the howling of a beast of prey,—

“May all hell’s curses blast me first!”

“Oh bear *her there!*” cried our hero to the terror-stricken priest, pointing at once to the fainting Geraldine, and to the sacristy that lay behind the altar. The Dominican obeyed. “Now, God decide between us!” shouted Thurles, elevating his sword, and closing on his rival, who at the same instant burst into a terrific laugh, and yelling out, “Amen!” rushed, with uplifted hands, to the attack. Both combatants vociferated to their soldiers to “stand back!” and having thus prohibited an interference with their personal ven-

geance, Thurles and O'Nial yielded to the passions which possessed them, and renewed their desperate combat. The latter, thirsting for blood and death, looked as if inspired with a demon's power, while he dealt his frantic strokes. The former, though his eye lightened, and his frame quivered with rage, seemed more anxious to master and disarm his adversary, than to end his life. With all the ardour of youthful courage, these fearless men pursued their strife, sometimes leaping aside in order to spring back upon each other with redoubled fury, and now, and then, linking their limbs in the firm grasp of wrath and vengeance. Thus, they fought and grappled, on, and on ; now keeping, now shifting their ground, until precipitately struggling forward, they shot through the gateway of the sanctuary, and waged their warfare on the spot of table-land beyond.

Within the chapel, all was violence and uproar. The soldiers of Thurles and O'Nial, prohibited from interfering with their leaders, had engaged in a hot party conflict. To the clash of weapons they added outcries that increased the horrors of a scene, from which Thurles had preserved the dearest object of his heart when, even at a moment of extremity, he thought on Geraldine's feelings, and with noble self-command, blending all the great-

ness of heroism with the tenderness of love, had ordered her removal to the sacristy. There, unconscious of the din and danger that surrounded her, our heroine lay senseless, attended by the priest, who was humanely trying to revive her from a state that bordered upon dissolution.

Meanwhile the contest of O'Nial and Thurles continued within a few yards of the precipice that yawned outside the chapel. They wrestled until they reached the very edge of the cliff. At the moment when they did so, the Chief, in endeavouring to evade a well-directed stroke from his opponent, made one false step, and staggering back, fell flat upon the ground. Thurles sprung forward, laid his right foot on the chest of the O'Nial, and holding the point of his sword above the body, gaspingly exclaimed,—“Rash man! force me not to murder! Resign the Lady Geraldine, and I will spare your life!”

For a second there was stillness. The clear radiance of the moon streamed full upon O'Nial, as he fixed the blaze of his eye on the figure that stood over him. The Chieftain's body strained in a mighty but a vain attempt to rise. His hair stood erect with rage, as he fell back to the earth, and a sort of ghastly grin convulsed his face with an expression of ironical scorn, that writhed him

to torture, while the words,—“ *You spare me! You!*” broke forth in a stifled groan, like that of death’s last agony.

“ Your answer !” cried Lord Thurles, in a voice of thrilling energy.

“ See it !” gasped the Chief.

He felt about with his hand, drew a dagger from his vest, and aimed a furious lunge at his victor, before the latter was aware of the intent.

An involuntary start, which moved him some steps backward, saved our hero from the stroke. On seeing this, O’Nial raised his hand still higher, uttered a second fiend-like laugh, and, preferring death to submission, plunged the dagger through his own heart. An ejaculation of horror broke from Lord Thurles. Every feeling of his soul was swallowed up by that of humanity, and he was in the act of springing back to wrench the weapon from his side, when O’Nial, perceiving the intention, in a transport of desperation, thrust both his hands into the clayey soil that was dabbled with his blood, and collecting all his strength, in a last convulsive effort the dying Chief heaved his body so close to the edge of the precipice, that it fell over the brink, and with an appalling sound dropped heavily from point to point of the projecting rocks beneath.

At this terrific spectacle, Thurles recoiled, and gasping for breath rushed back into the chapel. His appearance spread a sudden consternation among the followers of the O'Nial. Conjecturing part of the truth, and as if moved by one impulse, they wildly rushed past Thurles, and darted in a body through the gateway of the sanctuary, calling with shrill outcries on their Chief, at the instant when the Viscount, summoning the remnant of his strength, sprung to the door of the sacristy and dashed it open. Aided by firmness, which had risen to the height of heroism, Thurles had hitherto been enabled to sustain himself, but now, dizzy from exhaustion and overpowered by emotion, he staggered against the door-frame, where for a moment he was obliged to lean for support.

One solitary lamp shed its feeble rays on Geraldine, who, like a living statue, knelt upon the floor in speechless agony. Her hands were wildly clasped together. The damps of terror stood upon her brow. Her upturned eyes were fixed and lightless, and her trembling lips refused to articulate the prayer of her soul. From this dreadful state Geraldine was roused by the abrupt appearance of her lover. She gave a faint cry—she attempted to extend her arms—she fell in those of Thurles, who, recovering from his momen-

tary weakness, started forwards, caught her to his breast, and rapturously clasped her there.

“Blessed be the hour that restores you to this heart!” whispered the Viscount in the low tremulous voice of intense emotion. No pressure answered his. Geraldine uttered not a sigh nor word. Silent, cold, and motionless, she lay on the bosom that heaved beneath her cheek. An apprehensive chill stole through Lord Thurles’s frame, and checked its wild pulsations. He could not speak, but putting back the raven hair that veiled the face of Geraldine, in an agony of fear, he gazed upon the ashy hue which overspread her bloodless features. Dreadfully agitated, he laid her on the only bench the room afforded, and in frenzied accents, crying “Help! help!” flew to a door opposite to that by which he had entered, and, excitement again lending artificial strength, he flung it open with such force as nearly to overthrow a person whom he encountered at the threshold. It was the priest bearing restoratives for Geraldine.

“Fear not, she will revive!” said the holy man, reading at a glance all that was passing in the mind and heart of Thurles, who, unable to articulate a word, sprung back to his beloved, raised her head until it rested on his breast, and with eyes bent over the corpse-like figure he supported,

in agonized tenderness he watched for the result of that assistance which the Dominican benevolently tendered. Signs of animation soon appeared. The maiden's pale lips quivered, and her bosom heaved a long, deep sigh.

"She breathes,—she moves,—she lives!" cried Thurles in an ecstasy of thankfulness, pressing his lips to the forehead of Geraldine, who, opening her full dark eyes, cast a bewildered stare around the room. All seemed the floating of a dream, and horrible thoughts thronged back upon her, as, scarcely yet restored to consciousness, she quickly passed her hand across her temples, and murmured out—"Where am I?"

"With *me*!" softly whispered Thurles.

Geraldine looked up fixedly on the face that hung in fondness over her. With a sudden movement she half turned her figure, and falling on her lover's neck, she faintly said,—“Thank God!” and burst into a flood of blissful tears.

Thurles attempted to speak, but the effort was too much, and inarticulate sounds died away upon his lips. Now that the necessity of exertion had ceased, the livid paleness which sat upon his brow told all that he had suffered, and the languid smile that crossed his features, as he tried to summon up his strength, showed that it was almost exhausted.

The Viscount would have fallen but for the support of the Dominican, who gently disengaging the arms of Thurles from Geraldine, led his Lordship to a seat, and pouring out a large draught of wine, entreated him to swallow it. Vanquished by fatigue of mind and body, Thurles took the goblet, but before he raised it to his mouth he pointed to the Lady Geraldine. The good priest understood the gesture, and presenting our heroine with a medicinal elixir which he had prepared, he requested her to drink it. With a look of ineffable sweetness, Geraldine complied, and assisted by the stimulus of the moment and her own self-command, she regained both physical and mental strength.

The whole scene of the reunion of the lovers had not occupied above a quarter of an hour. In this short interval the clan of the O'Nial, fired with rage and despair, had roamed at random in search of their chief; but stumbling against each other, and lost in obscurity and confusion, a decisive evidence of the awful reality had not yet converted the apprehensions of the clansmen into certainty.

A few seconds sufficed to recover the Viscount from his temporary exhaustion. "Father, I know not how to thank you!" said Thurles after a slight

pause, laying down the cup, the contents of which he had drained ; then holding out his hand, he wrung that of the priest in the warm grasp of gratitude.

“ Speak not of thanks,” rejoined the latter, “ but tell me, what has been the fate of the O’Nial ?”

“ The Chief is——” The Viscount stopped short, and looked at Geraldine.

“ Dead ?” broke from her lips, in a low and shuddering inquiry.

“ Yes !” solemnly replied Lord Thurles ; “ he fell by his own hand—not by mine.”

“ Wretched man ! May God receive his soul !” cried the priest, raising his hands and eyes with unaffected piety to heaven.

“ You did not then approve of actions which your presence seemed to sanction ?” said Thurles, fixing a penetrating gaze on the ecclesiastic’s countenance, over which a slight flush passed as he replied, “ Approve, my son ! Oh no ! hereafter, I will tell you how it was that——”

The thrilling howl of the Ulster death-cry (1) resounded in the sacristy.—Thurles started to the doorway, and flying through it with the velocity of thought he disappeared.

The succeeding moments were fraught with solemn dread to Geraldine.—She scarcely breathed.

Her face was fixed by an expression of absolute agony, as she leaned her throbbing brow against the shoulder of the priest; and the maddened cries which rose from the clansmen of O'Nial, as they attempted to resist the redoubled efforts of the British soldiers, increased the spell of terror which was creeping over her. From a distraction too acute for long endurance, Geraldine was restored by the heroic Thurles, who suddenly stood before her, his whole figure seeming dilated by the spirit that burned within, as he exclaimed—"The rebels have fled!" Panting from exertion, for a second, the Viscount leaned upon his sword, but almost instantly sheathing it, he gently drew Geraldine towards him, and tried to soothe her agitated nerves, by half-murmured expressions of love, mingled with assurances of safety.

"What, all?—have all the clansmen fled?" cried the Dominican, recovering from his momentary surprise.

"Yes, all!—panic-struck at the sight of O'Nial's lifeless body, the discovery of which occasioned the yell we heard, the Ulster-men made but a feeble resistance to our last attack. Bearing away the mangled corpse of their Chief, they soon scattered over the wastes of the mountain, and now not a man remains to oppose us."

“ There is danger, notwithstanding,” rejoined the Father. “ O’Nial’s soldiers have probably gone for reinforcements to a clan who are secreted in a private haunt at no great distance. Not a moment should be lost—I am well acquainted with this ancient place. Think only of escape while it is yet within your power.—Follow me, and I will show where horses may be found ; they will expedite your flight,” said the Dominican, addressing Thurles’s soldiers, who now completely filled the nave of the chapel. They immediately obeyed the command, and headed by their reverend guide, proceeded in the direction that he pointed out.

This exit permitted the lovers to enjoy a short tête-à-tête, that was passed in mutual sketches of the leading circumstances which had led to their present situation. These were rapidly but strongly drawn, and in a short time the Viscount and our heroine were in possession of the most important facts that were connected with her rescue and abduction.

While these soul-engrossing details occupied the thoughts of Thurles and Geraldine, the troopers, under the directions they received, had reached the rude stable, where horses were kept ready caparisoned in case of a surprise from the English.

The uniform which the soldiers wore had, at the first glance, assured the Dominican that the deliverers of the hapless maiden, in whose cause he felt a strong interest, were Englishmen.

The dreadful confusion and hurry of the scenes which lately passed within the chapel, had prevented the reverend Father from ascertaining the name of the commanding officer who led his men to the attack and rescue they had gallantly achieved. The priest now obtained the information he desired from one of the troopers, who named Lord Thurles as his leader. The fame of the Earl of Ormond's son was so universally known, that any farther intelligence was unnecessary; for the religion, politics, and personal valour of the Viscount, were communicated in the single sentence that revealed his title. The staunch adherent of the Church of Rome sighed when he thought on the essential differences that existed between the relative faiths of Lord Thurles and the Desmond's daughter. The priest was a rigid Catholic, in the strictest sense of the word. He was also a liberal and enlightened man; therefore, though he mourned over what he termed the errors of Lord Thurles's creed, and felt gloomy forebodings of the miseries which might ensue from the strong attachment he had witnessed

between the Viscount and the Lady Geraldine, yet he resolved to leave the issue of events to that Divine Being, whose mysterious agency often brings good out of evil, and whose inscrutable designs are far beyond the comprehension of weak and erring mortals. Influenced by such considerations, the Dominican determined neither to argue with the lovers on the subject of their mutual affection, nor to desert them until after he had done all that lay within his power to yield assistance at a critical juncture.

CHAPTER II.

“ His act did not o’ertake his bad intent,
And must be buried but as an intent
That perish’d by the way.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“ Farewell, my children ! may the Eternal King
Preserve ye ! I have done my duty now.”

THE Dominican priest, cheerfully addressing the soldiers in terms of friendly encouragement, advised them to lose no time in selecting a chosen number of the finest horses which the mountain stud afforded. The men obeyed his orders with alacrity ; having done which, they prepared to return to the gate of the chapel. The Dominican led two of the ponies of the country, (2) which he had chosen for the use of Lady Geraldine and himself. One of Lord Thurles’s troop guided a noble steed that was destined for the Viscount,

and another which it was intended that our heroine should mount, on reaching the lowlands. All the soldiers were provided with able-bodied horses. On arriving at the entrance to the chapel, the party halted, and the reverend Father advanced alone to the sacristy, and entering it he briefly said, "All's ready!"

Thurles instantly hurried Lady Geraldine through the chapel. When they reached its gate, the priest, with a look of satisfaction, led our heroine towards the mountain-pony that he had selected for her use, and said:—"Daughter, you may trust to the sagacity of this little animal, which is so sure-footed that it will descend with care and safety the steepest cliffs, without the guidance of the rein. I will ride the other pony; when you reach the plain, you shall be mounted on a better steed; and for these sons of war, I have selected horses able as themselves," continued the Ecclesiastic, smiling benevolently as he pointed to the Viscount and his soldiers.—"No words," he added, prohibiting the utterance of the grateful ones he saw were hovering on the lips of Thurles, who, obeying the injunction, contented himself with a glance which eloquently spoke his thanks. The Dominican gave one of answering kindness as he placed Geraldine's hand in that of the Viscount, who, while assisting

her to mount her little steed, softly whispered, "Courage, beloved ! In a short time a father's heart and arms shall receive you."

"In God is my trust," murmured Geraldine. "You are with me ; can I then fear ?" The holy confidence which beamed from our heroine's pale but beautiful countenance, while she breathed those words, shed a seraphic expression over it. She cast one look upon her lover, which seemed to say, that she felt as if her soul was in his hands, and then relapsed into silence. The Lady Geraldine was in deep mourning for her deceased relation, Sir James Fitz-Maurice. The colour of her long black mantle could not be distinguished from the dark blue military cloaks that some of the English soldiers wore. At this accidental circumstance, Lord Thurles rejoiced, because he thought that should a rencounter with the enemy take place, it might serve to screen the Lady Geraldine from observation ; and wishing to do so still more effectually, he induced her to consent to throw over her head a hood of cloth, which was an appendage to the military costume of the times, and was often cast around the warlike helmet.

Ordering a soldier to lead the spare horses down the rugged pass, which the party were obliged to

descend, the Viscount threw one arm over the neck of the mountain pony, that, independent of any guidance but its natural sagacity, fearlessly prepared to amble down the steep declivity. His Lordship had divided his soldiers into two parties, each man of which led the horse he was to ride, on reaching the plain. One of these troops was placed in front, while the other was stationed rearward of Lady Geraldine and the Dominican priest who rode beside her. These guards were ordered to keep at a short distance; in consequence of which, the central trio were enabled to converse without being overheard. When all these preliminaries were arranged, Thurles, in a steady under-voice, gave the word — “Forward!” and with the tenderest solicitude watching every step of Geraldine’s pony, walked beside it, down the mountain path the party began to descend, and the rugged steepness of which, together with the darkness that had suddenly overspread the sky, compelled them to proceed at the slowest pace. While they were thus employed, the Dominican turned to Lord Thurles, and said in a low and earnest voice: “My son, I will now briefly account for my appearance in the late awful scene. When returning to our monastery, after having visited the pillow of a dying man, I accidentally encountered the O’Nial,

who, stopping short, inquired my name. I said, I was the Father Francis. He then asked if I belonged to the Dominican Priory; and on my giving an affirmative, the Chieftain told me he was in the act of journeying there on business of the last importance, which it was possible I might transact, and thus save time and trouble. I said that I was ready to oblige him if it lay within my power to do so. He seemed delighted at my acquiescence; and after much prefatory matter which it is unnecessary to detail, he proceeded to unfold the object of his intended visit to the monastery. The substance of his communication was this. He told me that the daughter of the Earl of Desmond had long sincerely loved him; that her father desired the alliance; but that owing to cogent political reasons, he did not dare to avow his wishes on the subject; therefore had connived at a secret marriage, to accomplish which, the Lady Geraldine had consented to elope with the O'Nial, whose return she was anxiously awaiting at her uncle's ancient castle, in the hope that one of my holy order would speedily arrive to unite her in the bonds of wedlock to her affianced husband."

"Villain!" ejaculated Thurles, with a sudden impulse stopping short, and turning round a countenance which, though touched by the cold light

of a passing moonbeam, sparkled with indignant fire.

“Forbear, my children!” said the priest, in a tone of firmness prohibiting the utterance of those animated feelings, with which he saw the minds of Thurles and Geraldine were labouring; “and, hear me to the end.” The Viscount reiterated the word “Villain!” and again walked on in silence, while the long deep sigh that Geraldine drew, revealed the sensibilities in which it had its source.

Though the Dominican sincerely sympathized with his hearer’s emotions, he wished to repress, rather than to encourage them; therefore, in a grave and unimpassioned tone, he thus continued his narration. “The Chief of Ulster implored me to expedite the performance of his wishes by consenting to accompany him back to the half-ruined Castle of Sir John of Desmond, which we have just left; and in conclusion said, that I might expect to find his betrothed bride most deeply agitated; for that the fate which seemed to hang over her idolized father and country, dwelt so intensely on her spirits, as sometimes to produce bursts of agony that threw a temporary darkness over reason itself. ‘Therefore,’ said the Chief, ‘should Lady Geraldine show any such symptoms at the ceremonial of our marriage, heed them not.’ He stopped,

and after a slight pause, added in an emphatic and mysterious tone:—‘ You know my power. If you speed my wishes well, and without troublesome inquisitiveness, it shall plenteously reward *you*, and the holy house of which you are a member.’ With these words O’Nial ended his communication. Its conclusion created a host of vague suspicions in my mind, which were almost confirmed, when, on further conversation, I discovered that the Chieftain had mistaken me for one of our brotherhood who died within the last few days. His name had been the same as mine. His character, I lament to say, was far from irreproachable. The Chieftain seemed acquainted with the qualities, though ignorant of the person, of the late Father Francis. This had probably occasioned the freedom of O’Nial’s communication with myself. I have only just returned from a religious mission, on which, by order of our Superior, I have been engaged at the Court of Rome for the last three years. Owing to my absence from this country, it is possible the Chief of Ulster never heard of my existence, which may account for his mistake respecting the deceased ecclesiastic. The closing offer of O’Nial, combined with what had previously awoke distrust, decided me not to undeceive him as to my personal identity. I deter-

mined to disguise the dark surmises which I entertained, and assuming an unembarrassed air, I assented to the wishes of the Chief, being anxious to try to save the daughter of the Earl of Desmond, to whom my church and country are so much indebted. This, I thought, I might contrive to do, before the preparations for the marriage were completed; but, on arriving at the ruined chapel, I found, to my infinite perplexity, that every thing was in readiness for the awful ceremony which I was expected to perform. I began to cherish hopes that my suspicions respecting O'Nial's conduct were erroneous; and with a heart filled with conflicting hopes and doubts, I took my station at the altar. Scarcely had I done so, when, chilled with horror, I heard the scream and saw the figure of the Lady Geraldine. My worst surmises were confirmed, when, in a state of stupefied dismay, I gazed on the unhappy maiden, while she was forcibly led on towards me. All that I, an aged and a feeble man, could do to avert the dreadful fate that threatened her, was to refuse to perform the rites which would have bound her to the man she hated. I resolved to brave death itself, rather than obey the command of the O'Nial, when he shouted forth his order to 'Proceed!'—The insensibility into which the

Lady Geraldine fell, the instant after she ejaculated the brief but emphatic sentence that spoke her fixed determination never to wed O'Nial, gave her and me a short reprieve:—My Lord, you know the rest.”

“ I do.—And, Father, may the God you serve reward you !” said Thurles, deeply affected at a narration, to which he had listened with breathless interest ; while Geraldine, with tears of silent gratitude, wept the thanks she was unable to express by words.

A short pause followed, after which the Viscount turned to Father Francis, and with forced calmness said :—“ The Lady Geraldine has told me, that during a solitary ramble, which, at the dawn of morning, was extended beyond its customary limits, she was seized by the lawless men, who took her prisoner, and placing her on the same horse with their masked leader, fastened a handkerchief across her mouth, thus preventing the possibility of her situation being revealed to the few people who passed along the unfrequented mountain track she was compelled to travel.—*That*, the Desmond's daughter has assured me, was the only act of rudeness which they offered—”

“ The only one indeed !” interposed the Lady Geraldine, addressing Father Francis.—“ During

the whole of my rapid journey, I was treated with a delicacy and respect that, considering the keeping into which I was committed, seems extraordinary; perhaps the presence of my uncle" (she shuddered as she pronounced the word) "may have had the effect of preventing the wild beings under his command, from offering me any rudeness."

"It may have had some weight," said the Dominican; "but purity like yours, my daughter, is its own safeguard, and must awe even the most daring ruffian into a degree of virtue;—when did you reach your destination?"

"We travelled day and night, without any interruption, excepting when we halted in the woods to take refreshment. We found relays of horses at the most lonely places; and towards the evening of the day succeeding that on which I had been torn from my home, we arrived at yonder Castle. I little thought that it belonged to my perfidious uncle, John of Desmond, who, Lord——But, Father, do you know *who* rescued me?" demanded Geraldine abruptly, discontinuing her recital, to ask a question that had suddenly arisen to her mind, and which her trembling voice almost refused to breathe.

"I do, and——"

"I am the son of Ormond," interrupted Thurles,

springing to the side of the Dominican, and cordially offering his hand; "until now I did not recollect to tell my name;—holy Father, let me hope you hear it with good-will."

"My son," replied the priest, fervently pressing the Viscount's proffered hand; "there is nothing in your title so appalling, that it should banish from my heart the kindly feelings which your late heroic conduct has created there. However deeply I deplore——" The Dominican suddenly paused, and checking the utterance of some powerful sentiment that seemed to labour in his breast, he dropped the Viscount's hand, motioned him to return to the side of Geraldine, and begged the latter to resume her narrative. She complied, as taking it up at the point where she had stopped, she said: "I was received at the Castle by an elderly female; she never left the chamber in which I was shut up, excepting at those times when she withdrew for a few moments, to prepare my meals; on which occasions she always locked and barred the door, keeping the key in her own possession. During one of those short absences, I scrawled a line, which I had previously contrived to bribe one of my late escort to promise to deliver to my father. The man had given me to understand, that he would loiter underneath my window, in the hope of receiving my commands.

As soon as I had scratched a few words to the Desmond, I dropped the paper through the bars of my casement, and with inexpressible joy I saw it was received by the wild being whom I was obliged to trust. At the instant when I was retreating from my window, the woman returned with the supper she served up. Seeing the perturbation, which I vainly tried to conceal, she cast a glance of alarm and suspicion on me. Whatever were her doubts, she forbore to express them ; but from that period another female brought my food, and my old attendant never left me until the instant when I was compelled to enter the chapel. A few seconds previous to that awful moment, the Chief of Ulster, for the first time, dared to intrude within my presence. All was then avowed, excepting the participation of my uncle in the plot of which I was the miserable victim. Yet it is but doing justice to O'Nial, to say, that he professed nothing but honourable and devoted love. The violence of his passion was pleaded in extenuation of an act of which he admitted the injustice, and for which he earnestly implored my forgiveness. I rejected his appeals with proud disdain ; and it was not until he found all gentler measures fail, that, hoping to subdue my firmness, he swore a fearful oath, that I should ac-

company him to the chapel, where a priest was waiting to perform the dreaded rite of marriage. It was then I felt my cup of wretchedness was full. I shrieked with terror, which gave place to despair; and nature was sinking under accumulated agonies, when I was forced to the altar, at the foot of which——”

“Cease—cease, I beseech you!” interrupted Thurles, strongly moved at witnessing the agitation of the Lady Geraldine. “Dearest! why dwell on scenes of harrowing remembrance? Rather look towards the future; and, thanking God for our deliverance from the past, let us not embitter the present by dreadful retrospections.”

“You are right, my son,” said Father Francis, who had listened with deep interest to our heroine’s recital, which, rapid as it was, enabled him to comprehend the leading incidents of her abduction.—“But tell me,” he added, with a look of inquiry, turning to the Viscount, “how did you discover the situation of the Lady Geraldine?”

“Providence directed that the paper which was intended for Lord Desmond’s hand should be delivered into mine. Induced by the promise of a high reward, the bearer acted as my guide, and——”

“Will do so agin, plaze God!” ejaculated O’Donnell, springing from a thicket to the open green-

sward, which the party had just reached. Murtoch's assurance suddenly seemed to merge into feelings of a very opposite character; for, on seeing the priest, he instantly fell upon his knees, and devoutly crossing himself, began to rehearse his Pater Noster, with astonishing volubility. The Dominican bent his eye more in compassion than in anger upon Murtoch, as he ordered him to rise; and charged him, under pain of incurring the severest penalties of the Romish Church, to act as a true and faithful guide to the Lord Thurles. With an expression which wavered between shame, contrition, and cunning, O'Donnell started up, and sighing out, "Ah, thin if I don't, why may the blessed Mary niver get a pardon for my sins—Ochone!" He stood silently awaiting further orders.

"How did you know that we had conquered?" demanded Thurles, with a scrutinizing look.

"Ah, thin, sure it is myself that niver lost sight of your honour," said Murtoch, with increasing animation. "And didn't I see ye, when yees fought with the O'Nial *aboove* (pointing to the overhanging precipice,) an' movrone! didn't my own two eyes behold his huge four quarters, as they coomed floundering down the crags in *smithereens*?" Thin, for why wouldn't I know

that yeese bate the boys?" inquired O'Donnell with all his former comic audacity.

"Enough. Are you willing now to guide us back?"

"By the blessing of God, I am; that's if bad luck don't attend me!" said Murtoch coolly, wiping away the large drops that stood upon his brow, with one hand, while laying the other on the neck of a horse, he sprung on its back, and triumphantly prepared to lead the way.

"May the Virgin speed and bless you both!" said the Dominican with considerable emotion, turning to Thurles and Geraldine as he pronounced the benediction.

"What, Father! will you not accompany us?" said the Viscount in astonishment.

"No, my son; this path (pointing to a narrow sheep-track) leads across the mountain to our monastery. Thither I must go without delay."

"And, holy Father, shall we never meet you more—*You*, to whom we owe so much?" said Geraldine, extending both her hands to the priest, in deep emotion.

"Daughter, that rests with God. His peace be with you!" The Dominican stopped, looked mournfully upon Geraldine; and then, in the figurative idiom of his native tongue, he said: "Dark

clouds are gathering round you. May a light from Heaven disperse them, and shed brightness on your path !” As the Father Francis solemnly whispered these words, he drew his cowl closely round his head, urged his pony to its utmost speed, and turning to the mountain path that led to the friary, he was several yards distant before Geraldine had recovered from the tremor which his valediction had created.

“Farewell ! God bless you !” said Thurles, waving his hand after the retreating figure of the Father Francis ; then drawing close to the side of Geraldine, he said : “The night advances ; we have far to travel ; and as there is some danger of pursuit, I would wish to mount you on a swifter-footed steed.—Here is one that seems gentle and strong,” added the Viscount, taking the reins of a fine horse, which a soldier led towards him. “Will you ride it, love ? and can you bear to hasten on our journey at a rapid pace ?” demanded Thurles, who, not having understood the Dominican’s last words, was unaffected by their meaning. With firmness, that seemed the effect of a resolution of purpose, Lady Geraldine gave affirmative replies to both those questions.

The necessary arrangements were instantly made, Geraldine mounted her new steed, the remainder

of the party vaulted on their saddles, and the next moment, the Viscount commanded Murtoch O'Donnell to show on the nearest road to the village of Adair, at which place one of the Earl of Desmond's castles stood. The Chieftain had several fortresses in the neighbourhood of Limerick. Those of Askeyton and Kilmallock were still more formidably strong than the castle of Adair; but as the latter lay at no great distance, Thurles, wishing to spare the Lady Geraldine all unnecessary fatigue, had determined on escorting her to its gates, where he knew she would be received with a rapturous welcome, and from whence she could announce her safety to the Earl of Desmond.

CHAPTER III.

“The moon was risen, and she sometimes shone
Through thick white clouds that flew tumultuous on ;
Passing beneath her with an eagle’s speed,
That her soft light unprison’d and then freed ;
The fitful glimmering through the hedgerow green,
Gave a strange beauty to the changing scene ;
And roaring winds and rushing waters lent
Their mingled voice, that to the spirit went.
To these she listen’d, but new sounds were heard,
And light more startling to her soul appear’d.”

CRABBE’S TALES OF THE HALL.

O’DONNELL obeyed the order he had received, and Lord Thurles’s party, putting their horses into rapid motion, crossed the glade that lay between the mountain they had just descended, and that which skirted the singular glen already mentioned.

Murtoch, riding between two troopers, acted as

a sort of vanguard to the other equestrians who followed, as he swept round the base of the steep, whose acclivity it was impossible for horses to ascend. On turning the abrupt angle of a projecting rock, the travellers entered on a wild and broken highway, from whence they emerged into a vast expanse of flat marshy ground, the insecure footing of which obliged the riders to relapse into their former tardy pace.

Lord Thurles could scarcely bring himself to regret this circumstance. He tried to persuade his mind, that all danger of pursuit from the clan of the O'Nial was over, and he felt an intense glow of happiness communicated to his heart, when availing himself of the opportunity for conversation, which the necessarily slow pace of Lady Geraldine's horse permitted, he rode close to its side, resting one hand upon the animal's neck. It was then that Thurles and Geraldine, yielding to the full power of sympathies that drew the mutual sentiment from the mutual mind, dwelt on the precious history of their loves, and interchanged whole chronicles of such soul-absorbing interest, that the consciousness of present happiness banished every idea of impending danger, and nearly obliterated the recollections of the painful past.

Their discourse was carried on in a foreign

tongue, in order to secure its purport from being understood by any persons who might chance to be within ear-shot of the lovers ; therefore little restraint was imposed on the communication of the important events that had happened since they parted, or on the expression of those vows of faith and constancy, which their language conveyed with the delicacy and feeling of true affection.

A considerable time elapsed in this all-perfect interchange of thought, which was succeeded by a silence still more delicious. At length the party, having crossed the marshy tract of country, entered one of those wild glens so common in the mountainous region of the South of Ireland, and which lay at a short distance from their place of destination. Scarcely had they done so, when a trampling like the noise of horses' hoofs was heard. Lord Thurles whispered to his men to halt ; and following the direction of the sound, he strained his eye to the farthest extremity of the short defile. Dark clouds which were hurrying through the sky, veiled the glory of the moon, and only allowed her beams to flash out from behind them, in fitful starts of brightness.

At the present moment, a dense gloom covered hill and dale ; but through the imperfect light, our hero thought he saw a mounted troop wheel round the shoulder of a mountain, at a little distance.

The Viscount, in a low voice, ordered a guard to close round Lady Geraldine, at the same instant plunging his spurs into his horse's sides. The animal, galled by the touch, galloped forward, and, with the speed of a meteor, bounded past O'Donnell and the foremost troop.

Thurles checked his courser by a sudden pull, which forced it back upon its haunches; but quickly mastering the steed, he raised himself in his stirrups, and with one hand shading his eyes, to concentrate the feeble light that prevailed, he waved the other to his soldiers as a signal to stand. While Thurles was thus in the act of endeavouring to reconnoitre through the dubiousness of starlight, the moon suddenly shone out, and flashed a transient gleam upon the arms of a numerous and well-mounted troop, from whom, at the same instant, a sharp steel-headed arrow glanced along the air, and shooting beneath our hero's upraised arm, stuck and quivered in the trunk of a tree immediately behind him.

This incident spoke the hostile intentions of the strangers. The confusion it produced is not to be described; but high above the tumult that prevailed, Lord Thurles's challenge was heard, as he exclaimed, "We are the Queen's liege men, —say, who are you?"

"*Foes!*" was the bold response.

A cry of vengeance burst from the English cavalry, and a sound which seemed its echo, rose from the unknown troop, as the two parties rushed against each other, and closed in combat.

Twilight again shadowed the earth, but the fleeting effulgence of the previous moment had, as it glowed and passed away, marked out the respective leaders of the adverse troops.

The beam vanished so quickly, as to allow only a glimpse of the majestic figures of the two commanders; but that had been sufficient to guide them to each other; they spurred their horses to the charge, and though neither knew the person of his opponent, it seemed as if the hearts of both were bent on mutual destruction.

The leader of the unknown band bore down upon Lord Thurles with such fury, as to force his steed to back several yards. The animal was young, and unaccustomed to the exercises of the field. It suddenly became most violently restive: and engaged in the management of his horse, it was with considerable difficulty that Lord Thurles evaded the well-directed strokes of the stranger, who seemed intent on thrusting him from off his saddle. In this severe contest, the riders had struggled to within an arm's-length of Lady Geraldine. Agonized with apprehensions for her

safety, the Viscount roused to still more desperate exertions, and aimed his sword so admirably, that it must have felled his antagonist to the earth, but for the restive spirit of Lord Thurles's horse, who, at this critical instant, despite of rein and spur, started on one side, which made the rider's stroke swerve short of its intended mark. The Viscount's foe suddenly wheeled his steed, so as to front our hero's in the direct line. This rapid action caused the clasp which fastened a sort of visor on the stranger's face, to burst asunder. The visor fell to the ground; but, heedless of the accident, Thurles's opponent levelled his spear with a deadly purpose, which seemed likely to prove fatal. A dreadful shriek rang like a death-knell in the ear of the stranger, while his extended arm was grasped with a fervent though a feeble hold. He shook it off, wheeled round, seized the arm of the Lady Geraldine, (which was the one that had arrested his,) and shouting, "Die!" upraised his weapon. It fell, and clashed on that of Thurles, who, with the speed of light, had interposed his sword.

The cry of "Father!" issued on the air like the wail of a departing spirit. The clouds, which until now had covered the sky, rolled suddenly away, and the moon's unchequered light glowed down from heaven on the Desmond and his child.

The hood of the latter fell back as she tottered on her seat.

“Is it? Oh, God!” gasped the Chief, dropping his spear, as, wildly stretching forth his arms, he threw himself from his horse, and caught the falling figure of the Lady Geraldine. “’Tis she! ’tis she!” cried the agitated father, drawing his child from her saddle, and straining her to his heart, while in a convulsion of mingled feelings she hung round him.

“Halt!” shouted Thurles to the soldiers. The command was needless. The Desmond’s words and the heart-piercing scream and exclamation of the Lady Geraldine, whose personal appearance was known to both troops, had made the English start to one side, while the Irish as instinctively sprung back upon the other. The clamour of battle ceased—a breathing silence followed—as if by the wand of an enchanter the horses and their riders seemed to be transformed to equestrian statues—every up-raised arm dropped motionless, and each wondering eye was fixed in rough but generous sympathy upon the touching scene that was presented to the view.

Scarcely had the first rush of agitation subsided when Geraldine raised her head, and directing the Desmond’s gaze to Thurles, she just articulated,

“ *He saved your child !*” and sunk again upon her father’s breast. A variety of emotions flushed the Earl’s face, and his faltering tongue could only ejaculate an interjection of amaze, when having followed the direction of his daughter’s hand, Desmond recognised in Thurles the preserver of Geraldine, and wrung his hand in silent gratitude.

The peculiar glance which the Chief, in the next instant, cast towards the troopers, plainly spoke his wish to our hero, who addressing his cavalry, exclaimed, as he pointed his finger to the southern extremity of the glen :—

“ Soldiers, retire there ! I would speak in private with the Lord of Desmond.”

“ Clansmen, retreat yonder ! I also wish to hold a parley,” cried the Chief, exerting himself to issue the command, and as he did so, extending his arm to the northern entrance of the valley. The troopers on both sides bowed, and drew off in opposite directions ; the English party stationing themselves at one end of the glen, while the Irish occupied the other.

With tender assiduity, Lord Thurles assisted the Desmond to lead his exhausted daughter towards a cluster of ancient oaks, underneath which some timber that had been lately felled lay upon

the ground. The trio seated themselves on the moss-covered trunk of one of those hewn trees ; and there, beyond the hearing and apart from the observation of others, the explanatory details which elucidated the mysteries of our heroine's abduction and rescue, were given to the Desmond.

As the reader is already acquainted with those events, we shall not recapitulate them ; but while they are narrating to the anxious ear of the Irish Chieftain, we shall make a few brief remarks, which it seems requisite to offer.

It will be remembered, that at the moment when a vivid gleam of moonlight enabled the Irish troop to distinguish the British uniform, and to launch an arrow at the leader of the English horse, the countenance of Thurles was screened by the hand with which he shaded his brow, while in the act of endeavouring to reconnoitre. Amid the darkness and confusion that followed, it is not astonishing that the Lord of Desmond should have failed to recognise the person of his opponent. The juxta position of the Lady Geraldine to her father, at the instant when his visor fell, enabled her to distinguish the outline of his features. The result of that startling discovery has been described. Thurles beheld, in one rapid glance, the imminent danger to which our heroine was ex-

posed, and, as we have seen, he flew to her assistance. The Earl of Desmond acting under the gloom of twilight, and from the impulse of sudden and impetuous passion, had not had the most remote idea that he was dealing with a woman when he raised his arm against his child, whose head and face were completely concealed by the hood she wore. If the Viscount's timely interposition was providential, Geraldine's had been nearly as much so in Thurles's case, for a state of exhaustion, which was the inevitable consequence of such repeated trials of strength and feeling as he had undergone within the short space of a few hours, would probably have incapacitated him from resisting the tremendous blow which the Desmond had intended for the man to whom he little thought he owed so deep a debt of gratitude. The blood of the Earl boiled with indignation when he was made acquainted with the treachery of his brother; but the rushing tide of passion ebbed away, and even the haughty independence of the Chieftain's spirit was subdued, on learning from Geraldine the full extent of his obligations to Lord Thurles; the Desmond wrung the hand of the gallant deliverer of his daughter, and poured forth the ardent feelings of his heart, while in the incoherency of strong emotion he tried to express

his gratitude, not only for the rescue of his child, but also for the action which had saved a father's hand from being polluted with her blood.

As soon as self-possession was in some degree restored, the Desmond accounted for his own presence, by stating that ever since the disappearance of the Lady Geraldine, he had traversed the country in disguise, in search of his lost treasure. He confessed his suspicions had been directed towards the English, and that, under this impression, he had hovered near the plain (3) where the general engagement had taken place between the Queen's troops and the Irish forces. When the battle of Monaster-ni-va was decided against his countrymen, the Earl, distracted with apprehensions for the safety of his daughter, and fearing that if she was in the actual power of the British, even the suspicion of disloyalty on his part might accelerate her ruin, had written a congratulatory letter to Sir Nicholas Malby.

The Chief contented himself with simply stating to Lord Thurles the fact of his having made this overture, without assigning the cause that had impelled him to an act, which nothing but the powerful impulses of parental love could have induced him to perform.

In reply to the anxious inquiries of the Vis-

count, as to the manner in which Malby had received the Chieftain's letter, the Desmond informed him that it had been answered by the severest censures; that the English General had asserted that certain papers, which implicated the Earl of Desmond in disloyal schemes, had been found on the person of Allen, when the Jesuit was discovered among the dead upon the field of battle, and that, on this ground, the overture in question had been rejected (4) with contempt, and considered as a cover to rebellious projects.

At this alarming intelligence Lord Thurles started, and was going to speak, but was prevented by the Desmond, whose blood rushed into every fibre of his face, as making a haughty motion with his arm he said:—"Provoked, my Lord, at the suspicions which were thus publicly avowed, and enraged at finding all my actions construed into proofs of disaffection, by those who only make the charge, because they know that if my vast estates were once confiscated, they would be given in reward to my accusers; I confess I was unable to restrain either my own indignation, or that of my Clan, when, before our irritated feelings had had time to cool, we unexpectedly encountered and attacked a troop of the Queen's horse. You have now, my Lord, the reasons for the overt act of dis-

affection which I have committed. You will report it in what terms you please to the Legislature of the Pale. I stand upon my own Palatinate, in which the law of England never was established nor acknowledged. You know my princely privileges. I am not your prisoner, for I yield not to the man who has not conquered me, and—

“ Even if I had, oh God ! how could I render up the Father of—”

The Viscount's voice strangely altered, and he was obliged to stop. His manly frame shook like an aspin-leaf, for he saw in all their mighty magnitude the accumulated dangers which overhung the House of Desmond. Geraldine, his idolized Geraldine, seemed standing on the brink of ruin, and the bolt appeared as if already hurled, which should dash her father from his proud estate of greatness.

The peril of the moment inspired Lord Thurles with sudden resolution ; and worked up to a pitch of desperate courage, he avowed the secret of his soul ; and in a paroxysm of passionate tenderness, confessed the love which linked his heart and that of Desmond's daughter in one kindred tie. With increasing agitation Thurles implored the Chieftain to consent to his union with the Lady Geraldine, pleading that such a measure would termi-

nate for ever the perpetuated discords which, for centuries, had raged between the Butlers and the Desmonds, and predicting the cordial acquiescence of Lord Ormond to the proposed marriage, if the Chief of Desmond would forget the past, and would assist in quelling that rebellious spirit, which was hurrying Ireland and her people to destruction. "Oh, if you will but promise this!" concluded Thurles with an eagerness that seemed to issue from the centre of his soul—"I pledge myself that every error of the Earl of Desmond shall be pardoned by his Sovereign, and that all shall give assurance of a happy future."

No power of language could convey an idea of the suspense, approaching to agony, that held our heroine spell-bound while she listened to her father's narrative, nor the dreadful agitation with which she heard the unexpected declaration of her lover. It would be equally unavailing to attempt to portray the various feelings that struggled in the breast of Desmond. He hid his face within his hands, and many moments passed in total silence. When the Chief uncovered his countenance, Thurles and Geraldine were terrified at the frightful change that had passed over it. A groan burst from the Earl's heart, while in a voice, which though lately as strong as a trumpet's note, was now fee-

ble like that of an infant, he faltered out, "You love my child!—didst say she loved you too?"

"I have said it," answered Thurles with affecting emphasis.

The Chieftain shuddered, as he turned a troubled eye upon his daughter. The moon silvered his fine features with a whiteness like that of the dead, and the rush of emotions that passed over them betrayed the unutterable workings of the inward man. Geraldine could not withstand that look. In an agony of feeling, she flung herself in her father's arms, hid her face upon his breast, and amid smothered sighs and sobs, confessed her love, and prayed for the forgiveness of the Desmond, in broken accents, which might have touched a heart of stone. The Earl's lip moved convulsively, the muscles of his throat swelled to their utmost tension, and the changing colour of his cheek betrayed the varying distractions of his soul. At length he spoke; and in a voice which, though low and somewhat husky, went into the ear with impressive distinctness, and struck upon the heart like the tones of the passing bell, he said,—
"Fool, dotard as I was! I ought to have foreseen this. Reason has come too late. From my heart, I pity and forgive you both; but I dare not encourage your mutual hopes.—My Lord," he added,

with forced calmness, turning to Thurles, "believe, I am not heedless of your sorrow.—And you! beloved one!"—The Chief stopped short. Confused sensations crowded to his mind, and intense misery seized his heart, as he gazed in anguish on his child. He felt unable to lay prostrate all her richest hopes and dreams of life. He could not speak the sentence that would send her broken-hearted to her grave. He could not quench the single ray which, like a light from Heaven, shone out upon the dangers that were darkening round her name.

The Desmond started to his feet, and abruptly seized the hand of Thurles, as with frightful agitation he exclaimed:—"In mercy, drop this subject!" The Earl let fall the hand he held, and firmly closed his lips. When he spoke again, his voice had assumed a steadier tone, his eye was fixed upon the Viscount's, and like one whose lofty mind gave increased power to his words, he said:—"We have all great duties to perform, with which no private feelings ought to interfere. My Lord, I pass you my parole of honour, that whenever the Council General shall require my appearance at the seat of Government, I will hasten in person to answer to the charge, which you *must* bring against me to the Legislature of the Pale; namely, that of

having headed a body of my clan against the Queen's liege subjects."

"Without the shadow of a doubt, I accept the pledge you offer," cried Thurles, struck with vivid admiration of the generosity of the Earl in having voluntarily given it, and inwardly determining to make his representations to parliament in such terms, and to soften them by such extenuations, as must secure the Desmond's pardon.

"Now, then, we part!" said the Chief, again clasping the Viscount's hand. "My Castle of Adair is only two miles distant. We shall reach it quickly; and there, my Geraldine will meet with the repose she needs so much.—Farewell!" A shade of deep regret stole over the Earl's commanding brow. Nature gained dominion above every feeling that rebelled against her laws; while, yielding to a resistless impulse, the Desmond turned aside to conceal a tear, and murmured in half-stifled accents, as he withdrew his hand, "Wherefore is *such* a man the son of Ormond?"

Lord Thurles started. The bright hue of hope flushed his cheek, and trembling with intense emotion, he exclaimed:—"Oh hear me yet, while—"

"Hold! my Lord! hold!" impetuously cried the Desmond, awing the Viscount into silence by an unexpected burst of vehemence. "Speak

not another word, except it be to say farewell to *her*," added the Chieftain in a low and softened voice, while he pointed to his daughter, who sat immovable as if a dead weight had been thrown on her heart, or as if her blood and feelings had been checked in their tumultuous course by some unknown and mysterious power.

Lord Thurles fell on his knees before the Lady Geraldine, and clasping her cold and trembling hands in his, he pressed them to his heart and lips. Then, looking a love which words could not express, he said in a hurried tone of murmured tenderness, "My own, my precious Geraldine! until we meet again, may God preserve you!" A change passed over Geraldine's cheek; she grew still paler than before, and yet she smiled. Her's was a smile of exquisite love, but it was one which seemed to say, that hope had fled for ever; and there was a sinking intonation in her voice, that smote on Thurles's soul, as she faintly pronounced the single word—"Farewell!" and averted her face to hide its speaking anguish.

Not daring to trust himself with another syllable or look, Thurles started to his feet, and wrung the Desmond's hand as he rushed past. The next instant, unfastening the bridle of his horse from the tree round which it was secured, the Viscount

sprung on his saddle, galloped to his troop at the southern extremity of the glen, and with them pursued the route which led to the English camp, as if life and death depended upon speed.

When Lady Geraldine had in some degree recovered from the dreadful state of agitation into which she had been thrown, the Desmond advanced to the open sward, and gave a signal to his men to hasten to the spot where he stood ; they instantly obeyed. The Earl then ordered a sort of litter to be constructed with the hewn timber that lay upon the grass. This was done, by firmly fastening several strong arms of wood across each other, which were afterwards covered with the cloth mantles the Desmondians wore ; upon these the Chieftain laid the exhausted Geraldine. Some of the stoutest men of the Earl's band then lifted up the litter and prepared to proceed. The Chief drew his horse close to his daughter, and the whole party, in unbroken silence, slowly took the road to the castle of Adair. They soon reached the richly wooded banks of the river on which that fortress stood ; a signal was sounded to the warder, the drawbridge which overhung the ancient fosse was lowered, the portcullis drawn up, and, in another moment, the Desmond and his daughter were received with cheers of joyous

welcome by the inhabitants of the castle, which, surrounded with all its scenery of water, forest, and mountain, presented a landscape of singular beauty. Day had dawned, the shadows of darkness were fast retreating, a rosy tint streaked the purple clouds of the East, and light, every moment springing up more gloriously, announced the rising of the sun, as the Desmond and his train entered the castle of Adair.

Though Lord Thurles had had a longer journey to perform, he had been obliged to stop some hours on the road in order to recruit his strength by rest and refreshment. A thousand varying feelings filled his breast with conflicting sensations during the course of his travel. Love, fear, hope, and despair, by turns agitated his heart, and usurped dominion over it ; but from these emotions his spirit only grew stronger in its fixed resolve to take some decided step, which should close his anxieties and bring them to a final issue.

Having dismissed Murtoch O'Donnell with a considerable reward, Lord Thurles ordered his men to repair to their usual quarters in the camp, and then hastened to seek an interview with the Earl of Ormond. Upon inquiry, our hero learned that his father had gone to Dublin, charged with political despatches. Feeling that not an instant

was to be lost, the Viscount hurried to Sir Nicholas Malby, and accounted for his recent enterprise by stating, that he had undertaken it in order to surprise the rebel O'Nial, whom he had accidentally learned was secreted with his clan among the mountains, at a little distance from the English camp. His Lordship added, that, as the result of his attempt was so uncertain, he had wished to incur all its responsibility; and therefore had not communicated his intention to his commanding officer. Military etiquette was not so strict in those days as it is in ours; a greater breach of it, than Thurles had committed, would have been pardoned, in consideration of the deed he had achieved, in compassing the death of the O'Nial; which, when communicated to Sir Nicholas conveyed such unqualified pleasure to his mind, and so completely engrossed his thoughts, that he heard of the romantic incident of Lady Geraldine's abduction with little interest, and never for a moment supposed that it could have had any share in occasioning Lord Thurles's gallant exploit. Our hero did not judge it necessary to enlighten Malby on this point, but in a few words, and without any comment, he mentioned his rencontre with the Earl of Desmond, together with his desire to proceed to Dublin the next day, in order to

submit the transaction to the consideration of the Irish Parliament. Sir Nicholas highly approved of that intention, enjoined Lord Thurles to lose no time in putting it into execution, and with a warm eulogium on the Viscount's conduct, terminated the audience.

Our hero, exhausted equally in mind and body, retired to his tent, threw himself on his couch, and fell into a sleep, from which he did not awake until the following morning ; when, refreshed by the unbroken rest he had enjoyed, he was enabled to commence his journey to the capital of Ireland. And what were the thoughts which filled the mind of Thurles as he travelled thither ? His feelings were deep and various ; for conflicting remembrances thronged back upon his soul. But, if memory had its woes, it had likewise its pleasures.

Lord Thurles reflected with triumphant pride and cherished tenderness on her, who shared his sentiments and centred all the sympathies of a devoted heart in his. He recollected that the Chief of Desmond had not rebuked his love for Geraldine, nor absolutely doomed it to despair ; the thought inspired courage. Hope, that substitute for happiness, pointed to brighter days, and, with creative power, shed a charm over the inquietudes of an indefinite future.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Is not enough, that to this lady mild,
Thou falsed hast thy face with perjury ?

* * * *

Is not He just that all this dost behold
From highest Heaven, and bears an equal eye.
Shall he thy sins up in his knowledge fold,
And guilty be of thine impiety ?”

SPENSER'S FAIRY QUEEN.

FOR the necessary explanation of the motives which actuated Sir John Desmond and the O'Nial, in their conduct to the Lady Geraldine, it is requisite to retrograde a little in our narrative.

Sincerity of purpose will not always avert suspicion, or turn aside the shafts of malice. Previous to the late battle, the charges that were brought against the Desmond's patriotism, had

gained much ground among the large body of whom his brother John was the then acknowledged leader.

A short time prior to the battle of Monasteri-va, doubts of the Chieftain's political honesty had so generally prevailed among the Irish clans, that notwithstanding the proof of his devotion to their cause which the Earl gave in harbouring the disaffected within his own Palatinate, a number of the malecontents had resolved to demand a more signal evidence of the sincerity of his professions than any thing they had yet received. This determination owed its origin to the intrigues and misrepresentations of Sir John Desmond. Furious at the steady reprobation of the murder of Davels, which the Chieftain uniformly showed, the author of that sanguinary deed descended to use the most contemptible arts to vilify the Desmond's character. In his own breast, Sir John was perfectly convinced of the sincerity of his brother's attachment to his country. But to assail the Chieftain's conduct with calumnious reports afforded an exquisite revenge to the base-hearted Knight, and gave an intense gratification to those fierce passions which burned to wreak their vengeance on the man who dared to avow his abhorrence of the crime of which their victim had been guilty. Besides, the

crafty mind of Sir John Desmond cherished a secret hope, that the results of the popular odium which his machinations had endeavoured to affix upon the Earl, might be ultimately turned to his own advantage.

Intent on individual aggrandizement, as well as on personal revenge, Sir John audaciously persuaded himself, that if he could succeed in breaking the ties which bound the majority of the Irish to the Lord of Desmond, he might eventually enjoy that high station which the rights of primogeniture conferred upon his brother. Instigated by two such powerful motives, Sir John conducted his manœuvres with consummate skill, and left no means untried that promised to promote his views.

In the many familiarizing conversations which had passed between our heroine and her uncle, during the progress of their secret expedition to London, a sufficient exposure of the state of Geraldine's heart had been unconsciously betrayed, to excite, in the acute mind of Sir John Desmond, a strong suspicion of his niece's attachment to Lord Thurles.

Conjecture had been changed into certainty by many subsequent intelligences, which the Knight succeeded in collecting through a variety of chan-

nels ; and he waited anxiously for the favourable moment when the secret of Geraldine's love (possessed without her knowledge) might be turned to his own advantage.

Aware of the decision of her character, as well as of the heroism of her sentiments, Sir John was convinced that no earthly consideration could induce Geraldine to give her hand to any other but the one to whom her heart was devoted with the ardour of a first and passionate love. He was equally correct in the opinion he had formed of the Lord of Desmond's disposition, with regard to his daughter. Sir John was certain that the hold which our heroine possessed on the affections of the Chief was so omnipotent, that its ascendancy must ever prove superior to the influence of extraneous considerations, or worldly impressions. These conclusions determined the Knight's conduct. The situation of public affairs was well adapted for the management of either political intrigue or private machination. Hence it was peculiarly favourable to the designs of Sir John Desmond, who found all that was requisite to work his purpose, in the stormy spirit of the Chief of Ulster.

The sudden, wild, and impetuous passion which Lady Geraldine's appearance, at Shanet Castle,

had inspired in the breast of the O'Nial, is already known to the reader. His was one of those vehement characters, engendered amid the turmoils of oppressive times, that spurned control, and found its proper element in the fiery atmosphere of popular commotion.

Impatient of the slightest restraint, the Chief of Ulster felt it impossible to submit to the self-restrictions he had imposed, and long before the termination of the mission into Ulster, which has been already mentioned, the secret of O'Nial's love was in the possession of his political coadjutor, whose interest in the furtherance of his suit, the northern Chief implored with almost terrifying earnestness.

At the moment when that abrupt proposal was made, Sir John was not disposed to receive it with the same readiness with which it was offered; therefore he had given a cold and equivocal answer to the Chief of Ulster. But, no sooner had the perpetration of Davels's murder called for the open and unqualified censure of the Earl of Desmond, than his brother, maddened to revenge, propagated the base rumours we have mentioned, and, not content with their dissemination, projected other schemes to complete the fiend-like purposes of his soul.

The resolutions Sir John had taken were these. He determined to excite and encourage the Chief of Ulster to solicit openly the hand of Lady Geraldine in marriage; to represent to the disaffected party, that the proposed union was one which involved the highest political interests of the country; and to urge the many who were dissatisfied with the Desmond's reserve, to make his reception of O'Nial's suit a touchstone which should be used as a test to prove the sincerity of the Earl's attachment to the cause of Ireland.

The means to accomplish these plans readily presented themselves.

Sir John Desmond found it an easy task to prevail on the Irish malecontents to place implicit confidence in his judgment, and experienced little difficulty in winding them within his snares. In the event of a successful rebellion, O'Nial would, probably, obtain possession of one of the most powerful of the Hibernian chieftainries, and, as the fortunate issue of the insurrection was scarcely deemed problematical by its hot-headed partisans, they were soon persuaded to credit Sir John's specious representations of the great national advantages that would result from the union of the Chief of Ulster with the Lady Geraldine Fitzgerald.

As soon as the abettors of Sir John's subtle policy had pledged themselves to support his plot, the Knight hastened to act the part it was necessary to perform with the O'Nial. It did not require much art and eloquence to induce the Chief of Ulster to believe that, as Sir John Desmond was to appear perfectly neutral throughout the whole transaction, and as the secret understanding between him and the disaffected clans was to be carefully concealed, the Lord of Desmond, when assailed by the proposed requisition, must consent to the measure that was made the practical test of his political rectitude. Full of hope and joy, O'Nial went to Desmond Castle, accompanied by the Chiefs who had pledged their word to support the lover, should he find it necessary to apply for the weight of their interference.

The sanguine O'Nial, however, scarcely allowed himself to entertain a doubt of success: with a heart full of rapture, he flew to hasten the moment which was to put him in possession of the treasure that he coveted, auguring, not only the favourable reception of his suit, but also a speedy restoration to the lands of his princely ancestors; for, if assisted by the co-operation of the Desmond, O'Nial felt confident he should eventually wrest his hereditary domains from the power of England.

An audience with the Lord of Desmond was claimed, and granted. A verbal declaration of O'Nial's sentiments was made in due form to the Earl, who, without entering into any discussion of the question, referred it to the decision of Lady Geraldine Fitzgerald, giving the impatient lover full permission to seek an immediate interview with the object of his choice.

The Chief of Ulster flew to pour forth the feelings of his soul at the feet of our heroine, who heard the avowal of his passion with unfeigned surprise. The pride of having inspired it afforded neither gratification to her vanity, nor pleasure to her heart.

In terms equally delicate and firm, Geraldine rejected the proposal of O'Nial; and having thanked him for the sentiments he professed, she besought him to spare her any farther expression of a love which she never could return.

Her refusal of the Chief of Ulster's hand was as decided and dignified as that which the Seneschal of Imokilly, and several other suitors of high rank, had recently received, on aspiring to secure the rich prize of Lady Geraldine's affections.

O'Nial's blood fermented with rage on finding his passion slighted by an unequivocal rejection; and uttering a broken exclamation of fierce dis-

pleasure, he rushed back to the chamber where he had left the Desmond with the Irish Chiefs.

As soon as the conflicting emotions which struggled for mastery in his breast permitted utterance, O'Nial indignantly related the circumstances of his interview with Lady Geraldine, and peremptorily appealed to the Desmond to exert his authority in revoking her decision.

The Earl, with firmness which carried a conviction of his inflexibility, refused the required interference; and though assailed by the entreaties, expostulations, and even threats of the O'Nial and his friends, he steadily declared, that no earthly power could induce him to sway his daughter's heart against its inclinations. Finding that all their arguments were inadequate to produce the effect which they desired, O'Nial, and the Chiefs who accompanied him, left the Castle with minds made up to desperation, and filled with the ambition of revenge; but these hateful feelings were so artfully disguised from the Desmond, that he saw his visitors depart without suspecting that they cherished any other sentiment than that of natural disappointment at the failure of their wishes.

The O'Nial lost not a moment in seeking an interview with Sir John Desmond: in a passionate burst of indignation the rejected lover detailed the

shock which his pride, hopes, and feelings, had received.

The Knight could scarcely conceal the demoniacal joy that filled his breast on finding that his schemes had been crowned with such complete success.

The results of his cold-blooded treachery were more than commensurate to his expectations.

Sir John triumphed;—but his brutal disposition, unsatisfied with the injury which had been inflicted on the Desmond's character, panted to obtain a fuller measure of revenge. He knew that the violent passions and temper of O'Nial would lead him to act in contempt of danger, and in defiance of principle. Sir John believed that great personal courage and mental intrepidity mingled with the more ignoble propensities of the Chief of Ulster's character; therefore he felt no hesitation in proposing the scheme of our heroine's abduction.—Regardless of the hazard and temerity which were involved in the meditated plot, O'Nial, with eager promptitude, undertook to execute an enterprise which he viewed as a mere matter of expediency. By a clever stratagem, the whole odium of its execution was thrown on the English Government; and hence, until the Earl of Desmond met Lord Thurles, neither his suspicions nor inquiries were

once directed towards the real actors in the abduction of the Lady Geraldine.

With the means through which that iniquitous transaction was achieved, and with the events to which it led, the reader is already acquainted.

CHAPTER V.

“ This new governor
Awakes me all th’ enrolled penalties.”
MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

“ Name your terms.”—
“ Bid him disband his legions,
Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate.”
ADDISON.

“ I will undertake the embassy,
And execute your great emprise.”

THE first step which Lord Thurles took on arriving at the Irish capital was to seek the Earl of Ormond, whose address he had obtained from Sir Nicholas Malby. A confidential interview ensued, during which the hearts of the father and son were filled with profound emotions. Much was

said on both sides. With promptitude our hero gave a succinct account of all that had occurred since his departure from the English camp. This was followed by a firm avowal of his undiminished love for Geraldine, and an acknowledgment of the specific declaration of that passion which Lord Thurles had made to the Chief of Desmond. Yielding to a current of feeling that he had not power to stem, the Viscount, with enthusiastic though agitated earnestness, declared, that no earthly influence could now deter him from following the course on which the whole of his happiness depended.

“ May I ask the nature of that course ?” said Lord Ormond with forced calmness.

“ It is this,” answered Thurles, speaking quickly. “ I am resolved to rouse every energy of my mind to try to gain the pardon of the Irish Parliament, for the recent act of which the Earl of Desmond has been guilty. But whatever may result from my exertions in the council,—whatever may attend those indefatigable efforts which I mean to make, to turn the Desmond from sedition, on *this*, my Lord, I am most firmly fixed. I have honourably kept the compact you proposed. The term of trial has expired, and I claim the reward of my forbearance in the consummation of my

hopes. Father!—friend!—refuse not to sanction them! Come with me to the altar of our God, and in his temple hear me pronounce the blessed sentence which shall join my heart to that of Geraldine in an eternal union.”

Lord Ormond was deeply affected, and felt at the bottom of his soul the profound agitation which, during the latter part of his son's appeal, had almost choked articulation. But the Earl knew the danger of reciprocating such emotion; therefore he suppressed, as much as possible, the indication of his secret feelings, while, in a few decisive words, he thanked Lord Thurles for the manly candour of his conduct, and cheered him with an assurance, that if the Desmond was pardoned by the council, and could eventually be prevailed on to renounce his political errors, in that case he, Lord Ormond, would retract his objections, and keep the word which he now solemnly passed, to consent to the marriage of his son with Lady Geraldine Fitzgerald.

These points being adjusted, the conference ended, and our hero instantly hastened to the council-chamber. There, as soon as possibility allowed, Lord Thurles laid a representation of the Chief of Desmond's conduct before the Irish Parliament, in a statement that was softened by every

extenuation which truth permitted. His Lordship's exertions to obtain the pardon of the great delinquent, on whose acquittal his entire mind was bent, were indefatigable ; and the appeal which Thurles made in the Desmond's behalf, was so eloquent and resolute, that had it been offered by any other than the son of Ormond, a suspicion of the pleader's loyalty must have been the inevitable consequence of the zeal which was displayed in such a cause. But the devotion of Lord Thurles to the interests of his Sovereign, was established by so many brilliant achievements and incontrovertible proofs, that even envy, which is as certain an attendant upon merit as shadow is to substance, dared not sully the rectitude of his intentions by a single breath. When the Viscount poured forth the feelings that rushed warm and quickly from his heart, the members of the council were convinced of his ingenuousness. Notwithstanding the cold sources of reasoning to which the minds of statesmen must recur, in weighing a political question, those of Lord Thurles's auditors were irresistibly swayed, by the glowing language in which the beneficial results that might follow the pardon of the Desmond were depicted ; nor was the energy of the speaker less influential, when he painted the tremendous consequences which would

probably ensue from the legal punishment of an act, that was palliated by the operation of the circumstances under which it had been committed.

After considerable discussion had taken place on several days, among the members of the Irish Parliament, the new Chief Governor, Sir William Pelham, decided on abstaining from an immediate denunciation of the terrors of the law ; and, with the consent of the council, delegated the Earl of Ormond to proceed to Desmond Castle, in order to acquaint its Chieftain, that through the powerful intercession which had been made in his behalf, a pardon for his late disloyalty was granted by the legislature of the land ; but, that, in consequence of the natural jealousy which was daily strengthening against him, the council deemed it necessary to tranquillize the public mind, and to check the progress of rebellion, by making certain requisitions, which the Earl of Ormond was commissioned to propose.

The nature of those final demands of Government, and the penalty that was annexed to their refusal, will be detailed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

“My Lord ! my Lord ! I’m not that abject wretch
 You think me : patience ! where’s the distance throws
 Me back so far, but I may speak,
 Though proud oppression will not hear me ?”

VENICE PRESERVED.

Salemenes. “I would have recall’d thee from thy dream :
 Better by me awaken’d than rebellion.

Sardanapalus. “Who should rebel ? or why ? what cause ?
 pretext ?”

LORD BYRON.

“Furorne cæcus, an rapit vis acrior,
 An culpa ? Responsum date.”

HORACE.

“Didst never
 Hear talk of retribution ? This is justice,
 Pure justice, not revenge ! Mark well, my Lords—
 Pure, equal justice.”

RIENZI.

“There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats.”

JULIUS CÆSAR.

THE Earl of Ormond, accompanied by his son and suite, departed from the capital at an early hour on the following day, and proceeded on his mission with all possible speed.

The Chief of Desmond had left his fortress of Adair, as soon as his daughter was sufficiently recovered to bear removal, and had returned with the Lady Geraldine to Desmond Castle, which was now the refuge of several outlawed personages. The Doctor Saunders, who had recently published a work in vindication of the bull which Pius Quintus fulminated against the Queen of England, was also harboured within the Castle of the Desmond.

The open demonstration of the Chief's defection to the British Crown, which was given when he appeared in arms against a body of the Queen's cavalry, effectually crushed the suspicions that had been entertained respecting the sincerity of his devotion to the common cause ; and his subsequent conduct in avowedly protecting several noted offenders, secured the final annihilation of those doubts of the Earl's political honesty, which Sir John had excited among the Geraldines of the South.

In the present troubled aspect of affairs, prudence and patriotism conspired to induce the Lord of Desmond to repulse the natural feelings which would have led him to take summary vengeance on the enormities of his brother's conduct. Danger and dissension were abroad. The division of interests, which an open rupture between the prin-

cipals of the Desmond party must have caused, would have irritated, to an alarming pitch, the conflicting factions that were scattered through the country. Conscious of this, the Earl contented himself with communicating to Sir John Desmond his perfect knowledge of the iniquity of the late proceedings, announcing, at the same time, his full determination to requite them as they deserved, whenever circumstances might permit him to chastise the Knight's delinquency. But as it was impossible that the Desmond could obtain adequate vengeance for his injuries, until a change in the political world was effected, Sir John was coolly informed, that in the interim which must elapse, before the guilt of his conduct could be publicly noticed, he should be employed to harass the English troops in a distant part of the country ; and that as soon as the intestine broils of Ireland were ended, retribution for the wrongs which had been inflicted on the Desmond, should be sought and found.

This determination of the Chieftain was a prudential one. Had the brothers come into personal contact, they would have found it impossible to conceal their real feelings, and, in determining to exercise his own energies and those of Sir John, in different parts of Ireland, the Desmond adopted

the only measure that could effectually prevent the rencounter, which he desired to postpone until the career of civil warfare was closed, either by victory or defeat.

The Earl's unequivocal declaration of fraternal hatred, was warmly reciprocated by Sir John Desmond. To the strange conditions of the singular armistice that had been proposed, the Knight submitted, from a conviction of the political necessity which obliged him to agree to its stipulations. The same feeling induced him to consent to follow the Chief's example, in concealing animosity under the garb of a pretended reconciliation, until the time arrived that should permit the brothers to bring their controversies to the only sort of decision which could end them.

On the morning succeeding the day when these arrangements were completed, the special courier, who preceded the Earl of Ormond, reached Desmond Castle, with an express that conveyed intelligence of the intended embassy. The Earl promptly signified his consent to the interview that was proposed, and prepared to receive the Lords Ormond and Thurles, in the audience chamber of his Castle.

We have already said that the deceitful expedient which Ormond employed to estrange his son

from Lady Geraldine Fitzgerald, was the only instance of absolute duplicity which the history of the Earl's life afforded. Reflection had portrayed the nature of his conduct in its real colours. Shame mingled with remorse at the recollection of the dissimulation he had practised; for he well knew that if Thurles had discovered his evasion, he would have mourned it from the bottom of his soul, and must have secretly despised the man who could demean himself so far as to sacrifice the virtues of sincerity and truth, even under the most urgent circumstances.

Upon all this the Earl had long and frequently pondered, while bitterly condemning himself for a manœuvre which all the sophisms of human policy failed to justify to his conscience. Guilt could find no panacea; for plausibilities were insufficient to stifle that inward voice which upbraided the Earl with a flagrant violation of principle. It is sometimes easier to delude the world than to deceive one's own heart. Lord Ormond had sufficient presence of mind to conceal his secret feelings, but they preyed upon his spirits so acutely, that he came to a determination to atone for what caused him such unhappiness, by taking the only step which could expiate the reprehensibleness of the part that he had acted. This

step consisted in a resolution to try to forget his enmity to the House of Desmond, and, in a settled purpose, to fulfil, in perfect sincerity, the promise he had made of consenting to his son's marriage with the Lady Geraldine, provided that the political conversion of the Desmond was eventually effected.

Lord Ormond resolved to leave no means untried to attain that object. He determined to try conciliatory measures in the first instance, and should the *suaviter in modo* fail, he designed to terrify the Desmond into obedience to his Sovereign, by such threats as seemed likely to reclaim the refractory Chief, and to force him into the submission which the Government desired.

When Ormond had entirely made up his mind on those points, he privately communicated his intentions to his son, who concurred in the general policy on which they were founded, addressed many arguments in favour of a pacific line of conduct towards the Desmond, and warmly thanked Lord Ormond for the visible anxiety he showed to effect a change which promised to have such beneficial influences on the future.

Engaged in this confidential intercourse, time sped swiftly with the travellers, and it was with some surprise that, on the morning of the fourth

day's journey, they found themselves within sight of the picturesque towers of Desmond Castle, which suddenly rose to view as Ormond's party turned one of the windings of the bold and rocky coast that skirts the waters of the great Atlantic.

On perceiving the vicinity of their place of destination, the Earl and his suite pressed their horses forward, and in a few moments reached the gates of the ancient fastness of the Desmond. It seemed fortified for war. A number of gallow-glasses were pacing their rounds on the battlements as well as within the walls, and the court-yard was thronged with troops of military and the humbler classes of the Chieftain's household.

The drawbridge of the Castle was flung down as soon as Ormond's troop appeared on the open area before the great gates, which were hastily thrown apart, and in another moment the Earl and his suite were received, with every ceremonial of respect, by some of the principal officers of the Desmond's retinue, who were in waiting to escort the strangers to the audience chamber of the Castle. Lord Ormond and his train dismounted, and preceded by the seneschal of the fortress, they passed through a crowd of warders and retainers, who were clad in the yellow tunic, dark blue fallin, and party-coloured truis, which were the

common equipments of the servitors of Irish chieftains. Having crossed many inner courts and rambling passages, the strangers were conducted into one of the principal apartments of the Castle.

Here they stopped, while an officer proceeded to another room in order to announce the arrival of the Lord of Ormond. After the lapse of a few minutes, the Chief's acquiescence to an interview was signified in form, and almost at the same moment, the folding-doors which opened into the audience chamber were thrown apart, and the Lords Ormond and Thurles, with their suite, found themselves in the presence of the Earl of Desmond.

The Chieftain rose, and with an imperious inclination of the head, and a few words of distant courtesy, he received the embassy of Government.

The Earl of Ormond returned this cold greeting with tempered dignity; then glancing at the numerous officials who were present, he calmly said:—"My Lord of Desmond, as the communications with which I am charged by the Council are partly confidential, with your permission, I should wish our conference to be strictly private."

"Withdraw, Sirs, and accompany those gentlemen to the banqueting-hall," said the Desmond, addressing his personal suite, and extending his arm to that of Ormond.

Thurles fixed an appealing look upon his father, who understanding its expression, turned to the Chief, and said :—" I have yet to propose another request. My Lord, will you make my son a party to our conference?"

" Certainly.—And now I have to announce *my* wishes, which are these; that the communications of Government may be briefly given, and that this gentleman, whom I present to your Lordships as the Doctor Saunders, shall remain with me while I receive them."

The person who was thus introduced had hitherto stood apart with his head bent downwards, in an attitude of apparent meditation. He now advanced, and returned the almost imperceptible acknowledgments of the Lords Ormond and Thurles, with haughtiness quite equal to that with which they were offered. The few words that had conveyed the Chieftain's pleasure, were uttered with a peculiar inflection of tone which precluded expostulation. Ormond felt it would be vain to attempt to dissuade the Desmond from a purpose so distinctly and imperatively expressed. Therefore opposition was not ventured; but as the door closed on the retinue which it excluded, Lord Ormond, fixing a glance of scrutiny on Saunders, said:—

“ You will prepare your ear, Sir, for communications which may wound its nicety.”

The eye of the ecclesiastic momentarily fell beneath a look which seemed to scan his very thoughts. Without appearing to notice this, Ormond turned to the Chief, and added in a gentler voice,—“ Before I proceed to the business of this meeting, I deem it right to warn you, my Lord, that some conversation must ensue, which, both for your sake and my own, I wish to hold in private.”

“ Be it so,” replied the Chieftain coldly. “ Since the death of my late confessor, Father Allen, the Doctor Saunders has occupied that station in my household. Having said this, it is scarcely requisite to add, that whatsoever is intended for *my* ear may be announced to *his*.”

Ormond felt deeply annoyed by the firmness with which the Chieftain spoke; but his presence of mind enabled him to rally; and endeavouring to conceal his vexation, he mildly said:—“ I must submit to what I have not power to prevent.”

Saunders darted a scowling look of deliberate indignation, the intent of which was fully understood by Ormond, who, in his turn, bent his eyes on the ecclesiastic with appalling sternness, as he said:—“ I shall not stoop to farther expostulation, but will proceed to state the object of this meeting.

My Lord of Desmond," he added, addressing the Chieftain, "I am the sworn servant of my Sovereign, and am bound to speak the pleasure of her Majesty's ministers with truth and firmness. The overt act of disaffection which your Lordship committed, in appearing in arms against a body of the Queen's cavalry,—an act contrary to all law, and deserving the severest punishment,—is pardoned by the Council General. In consideration of the clemency thus shown, I am induced to hope you will subscribe to the justice and expediency of those final requisitions, which the legislative body of this kingdom has commissioned me to propose unto your Lordship."

"Name them," returned the Desmond, drawing himself up into an attitude of proud defiance.

"They are these. (5)—To crush the suspicions which, I grieve to say, your recent conduct has created, and to tranquillize the anarchy which prevails in this distracted Island, the members of the Council General demand the surrender of your Lordship's Castle, either of Askeaton or Carrick-a-Foyle, to the Queen, in pledge of future loyalty. You are also required to submit in all things to the judgment of her Majesty and the Council of England, or to the Parliament of the Pale; and until public peace is re-established, you are called

upon to lend your vigorous aid in the present war against Sir John of Desmond, and all other traitors. Lastly, my Lord, I have to desire that the Doctor Saunders and those suspected persons who are harboured in this Castle, may be delivered up to Government, in open attestation that your Lordship is worthy of the pardon which I have been empowered to announce this day."

The Doctor Saunders started forward, and was about to speak, when the whirlwind of passion that was on the point of bursting forth, was repulsed by a silencing look and an energetic action from the Lord of Desmond, which expressed his meaning as intelligibly as though a thousand words had amplified it.

The Priest strode abruptly away without uttering a syllable; and the Chief, subduing a severe internal struggle, assumed an air of proud security, as he said:—"My Lord of Ormond, I scorn to answer imputations brought forward by the actors of a base conspiracy, whose object is to deprive me of my principality, and to bestow its lands upon a herd of low adventurers, who varnish over their designs with the pretence of principle. The propositions with which your Lordship has been charged, are worthy of the source from whence they sprung. Is there a man who

would consent to render up to death the friends who trusted in his honour? If such a being can be found, I thank my God, *I* am not he! Take back, my Lord, this answer to a requisition, which with abhorrence I reject. As to the surrender of my Castle, why should I agree to *that*? for, has not the Queen a hostage in possession, which outweighs all that my principality could offer?"

"Beware, my Lord!—Remember that your son—"

"Touch but a hair of his young head, and all the land shall float in blood!" exclaimed the Chieftain, in a burst of fury which shook his whole body, as if a thunder-bolt had stricken it.

"Be patient, my Lord of Desmond!" returned Ormond in a conciliatory tone, wishing to smooth the increasing difficulties of an adjustment. "These passionate emotions are unnecessary; the royal word is passed, that, under every circumstance, the life of your son shall be as safe beneath the Crown's protection as within your own. Let us not mistake each other; I come with a desire to enlighten—to reconcile—to save! Why will you decline my overtures of peace?"

This mildness assuaged the extremity of the Desmond's rage; and striving to master the pas-

sions that boiled within him, he said, in a suppressed and studiously modulated tone:—"My Lord, the time is come when I may openly declare the truth. What laws can authorize the crime of tyranny, or justly bind allegiance to oppression? Cast but a glance upon the wretched policy that now distracts this country. '*Divide and govern*,' is not *that* the motto which has ever been adopted by her rulers? Why is the ancient faith of Ireland proscribed and persecuted? To gratify cupidity and prejudice.—Why are her discontents fomented? The words of the English ministry shall give the answer; they have said, 'Should we exert ourselves (6) in reducing Ireland to order and civility, it must soon acquire power, consequence, and riches. The inhabitants will be thus alienated from England; they will cast themselves into the arms of some foreign power, or perhaps erect themselves into an independent and separate state. *Let us rather connive at their disorders*, for a weak and disordered people never can attempt to detach themselves from the Crown of England.'—What has been the Queen's own language to her Council, when the Governors of Ireland reported the existence of the war, which their misrule created? '*If it goes on*,' exclaimed the generous Princess, (7) "*it will be better for*

you, for there will be estates for you all!" Thus, disorder is fomented for the purposes of confiscation, sedition is promoted to countenance injustice, and the passions of a whole people are inflamed, to keep the monster Despotism on its basis! What wonder then, if, in the frenzy of despair, goaded past the bounds of forbearance, the Irish struggle with their chains, and strive to shake them off! What wonder if, with the incubus of misery seated on their hearts, the oppressed should seek revenge on the oppressors! But, perhaps, this open reprobation of the policy of England, this bitterness of spirit, may appear ungrateful; for what has been the conduct of Elizabeth towards myself? Did she not liberate me from the Tower, and, with gracious promises, remit me to the Governor of Dublin, where my sign manual to her pacific deed, was to ensure a charter of unnumbered blessings to this land? 'Tis true—'tis true—and I should be most grateful for the secret reason of those healing overtures! Well may you start, my Lord, when I proclaim their object to be—*murder!* The murder of my brother, cousin, self;—then wherefore should I not be *grateful?*"

Convulsed with rage, the Desmond was obliged to stop, and, thunderstruck by this unexpected de-

claration, the whole group stood immovable and speechless. The Chieftain was the first to break the momentary pause. He folded his arms across his chest, whereon his head sunk slowly; and advancing his right foot, he slightly played it up and down, while in a voice that changed from a tone of desperate sarcasm to a deep note, which still more vividly expressed the reality of passion, he hoarsely whispered, as if speaking only to himself,—“ We fled the murderer.”

“ *Murderer!* ” echoed the Lord of Ormond, who, no longer able to control himself, started forward and half-unsheathed his sword. “ Your speech is treason. Retract it, or—”

“ In the name of God and of the Queen, forbear ! ” cried Thurles, rushing with uplifted hands between his father and the Desmond. Then, turning on the former, he sternly added,—“ In obedience to the Council, we have sworn to keep the peace. My Lord, remember your oath ! ”

“ I will. The Desmond’s fate must be decided by a higher hand than mine ! ” said Ormond, dropping his sword into the scabbard ; his dark features glowing with indignant feeling as he did so.

“ Your interference was unnecessary, my Lord Thurles. This hall has never been polluted with

the stranger's blood ! *Here*, even that of a Butler is secure from violence," exclaimed the Desmond, turning with a lofty air upon our hero. Yet no sooner had those words been uttered, than a tide of recollections seemed to rush across the Chieftain's mind, which instantly imparted a softened expression to his eyes, that overcame their late impassioned fierceness.

" May I speak ?" said Thurles in an under-tone, addressing the Lord Ormond, who signified permission by a hurried action of assent.

This was a crisis. The imprisoned feelings of Lord Thurles gushed forth free and warm from the depths of his spirit ; no longer able to repulse them, he grasped the Desmond's hand, and flinging himself decidedly into the subject which he panted to discuss, poured out the sentiments of his heart with an energy that spread over the whole circle of influential bearings which it was his object to direct to the support of those measures on the adoption of which every chance of present peace and future happiness depended.

The strength and the sublimity of Thurles's character were never more strikingly developed than at this trying moment. A strange kind of sympathy was awakened in Lord Ormond. The enthusiasm of virtue was communicated to

his soul. He no longer wrestled with its infirmities, for they were whelmed in the flood of great and good thoughts that came over his mind, while he listened to his son. Catching no inconsiderable portion of Thurles's generosity to the infatuated Chieftain, Ormond almost forgot his ancient enmity; and under the strong impulses of that kindly spirit which shed warmth on all within its influence, the Earl reiterated the sentiments of his son; and protesting against any but the most honourable feelings, he conjured the Desmond to consider how hopeless all schemes must prove for the separation of Ireland from the English Crown; at the same time pointing out the awful issue which would necessarily ensue from a perseverance in the courses of rebellion. Entering into a comprehensive view of the whole subject, Lord Ormond seized on every point which could be wrested into a vindication of the rigorous measures which, in the great struggle of political opinion, England had carried into execution. But this was done in a conciliatory tone of deep and generous feeling, that was calculated rather to soften than to exasperate existing animosity.

The political conversion of the Desmond was the grand end which the speaker had in view.

To this all his efforts were directed ; and alive to the importance of the undertaking, Ormond omitted nothing which could facilitate its achievement. After having painted the impracticability of any enterprise that sought to disjoin the weaker from the stronger country, Ormond drew a true and frightful picture of the wretchedness which those who called themselves the friends of freedom would entail on the great body of the Irish people, by plunging them into an universal ruin. The Earl then appealed to the self-interest of the Desmond, holding out every promise and argument that seemed likely to prevail upon the Chief to change his principles, and to adopt the course of policy which must further the views of individual advancement.

The zealous envoy of England quickly saw that such representations produced an effect directly contrary to the one he wished ; and that the forms of selfishness had no power over such a mind as that of Desmond. The arguer therefore changed his ground, and as a last resource, for softening the inflexibility of the Irish Chief, Ormond resolved to touch the leading spring from whence all that was most tender in his character might be supposed to flow. With a devotion of purpose, and an abandonment of hostility towards the Des-

mond, which seemed to lose the very consciousness of its former existence, Lord Ormond followed up his son's previous overtures, and with respectful frankness, and words that seemed to issue from his heart, dwelt upon the praises of the Chieftain's daughter. He admitted the serious obstacles which hereditary discords, and the differences of political and religious principles, had presented to the marriage of Lord Thurles with the Lady Geraldine Fitzgerald; but, notwithstanding that the latter of those impediments still existed, Ormond declared, that the depth and constancy of his son's attachment had been so severely proved, that he could no longer refrain from sanctioning it with his full and heartfelt approbation, provided the Desmond would escape from future self-reproach, by acceding to the final requisitions of the Government; a proceeding which, it was proposed, should be immediately followed by a solemnization of the lovers' nuptials.

Ormond spoke with a peculiar animation, that was almost irresistible; and concluding in a burst of enthusiasm, which was admirably calculated to subjugate the feelings, he exclaimed:—"Let the result of what I have advanced be concord! Consent to the terms I have named, and then, my Lord, your princely person shall assume its proper

station near the Throne of England. You will enter on a career of honour and of glory for us all ! and the union of our children shall be the cementing bond, to reconcile our feuds for ever !”

Thurles involuntarily lifted up his hands in the attitude of prayer, and riveting his eyes upon the Desmond, looked a thousand supplications, which no words could have expressed so eloquently as did that full affecting gaze.

The Desmond was moved.—Parental affection, one of the strongest passions of his soul, now worked within him.—Feelings of yearning tenderness came over his heart, and the emotions of the father struggled with those of the misguided patriot.

The Lords Ormond and Thurles awaited, in speechless agitation, the issue of this inward contest.

A scornful smile had never left the lip of Doctor Saunders, who, during the latter part of this scene, stood like an incarnation of the evil one, watching for the moment when his machinations might be wielded to the best advantage. He now hastily advanced, and in a deep low voice, he muttered in the Desmond’s ear,—“ My Lord, the Lady Geraldine should be consulted on a point of such importance to her happiness.”

“ ’Tis true—she ought. Father, I pray you,

seek my child—tell her what has passed, and bring her quickly here.—Oh, God, direct !”—The Desmond checked the broken exclamation, threw himself on a seat, and pressing his hand to his brow, as if to still the fever of his brain, he sunk into an agitated silence, when the door closed on Doctor Saunders, who with eager haste proceeded on his mission.

For purposes which will explain themselves hereafter, the priest secreted the chief minstrel of the Desmond in a small room adjoining the audience-chamber ; and after having arranged some future measures with the bard, Saunders hurried to the private sitting-room of the Lady Geraldine. He entered, and found the object of his search alone, and kneeling at a small table. Her eyes were mechanically fixed on the falling sand of an hour-glass that stood before her, and she clasped against her heart a small silver image of her guardian saint, as if silently imploring its protection. There was a settled paleness on the maiden's cheek, that told the agonized suspense which she had suffered during the deliberations of the council in the audience-chamber. The moment Geraldine beheld the Doctor Saunders, she arose and tried to speak ; but her tongue cleaved to the roof of her mouth, and she could only

look the inquiry which she wanted power to utter. Saunders obliged her to sit down ; and taking a place beside our heroine, he hastened to give a succinct but most exaggerated statement of the requisitions of Lord Ormond ; studiously concealing all the generous traits of conduct which the Earl and his son had shown, and skilfully magnifying every point that could add a stimulus to the pride and patriotism of his auditrress, or which could lead her to adopt the impressions that he laboured to produce. The artful priest marked with joy the inward conflict, where love warred with pride, in the bosom of the Lady Geraldine. He gazed on her without feeling one relenting pang, while proceeding to communicate the *permission*, which Saunders said the Earl of Ormond had reluctantly yielded to the marriage of his son with the daughter of the Desmond. This information was followed by a distorted statement of the national degradation of Ireland, and the total compromise of the Chieftain's honour, which, according to his confessor's account, were annexed to the execution of the compact that had been suggested.

The glance of the high-souled Geraldine shot fire. Saunders seized on an excited moment, that seemed propitious to his views, and communicated

the Desmond's message. Stating that Geraldine's decision on the proposed question would either preserve or destroy her father's consistency and her country's freedom, the priest implored for a rejection of the specious offers of the Earl of Ormond.

“ Father ! I *will* give the answer you require,” exclaimed our agitated heroine, in a tone in which pride and misery of heart contended. A sickness of the soul succeeded to these words ; for Geraldine felt the vast extent of the sacrifice she was about to make, and keenly saw the dangers and the wretchedness which might follow it. Her senses swam. A film overspread her sight, and she breathed with difficulty. Saunders threw open a window, applied cold water to her temples, and forced some down her throat. Geraldine struggled with her weakness. After the lapse of a few moments she arose, and leaning heavily on the arm of the priest, she pointed to the door, silently signifying that to obey her father's message, and the wishes of her spiritual guide, formed the immediate impulse of her mind. This was precisely what the Doctor Saunders most desired. He was anxious not to give our heroine time to think or reason. Supporting, or rather carrying, the Lady Geraldine, Saunders hurried her across the passages that led to the audience-chamber. He

quickly reached it, and throwing open the door, exultingly exclaimed:—"My Lord of Desmond, I have told your daughter all;—she comes to answer for herself!"

The soul flashed forth from Geraldine's dark eyes, as they turned and dwelt on Thurles with a look of anguished love. Deprived of power to advance a single step, she was compelled to pause, and to cling still closer to Saunders's arm; but finding it inadequate to support her tottering frame, she leant against the door, seeming rooted to the spot on which emotion had enchained her. Geraldine's lips moved rapidly, but no sound escaped them; and the arm she had raised dropped motionless by her side.

Thurles stretched out his hands imploringly, every faculty suspended in the intenseness of his feelings; and almost equally agitated, the whole group stood in a state of mute and breathless expectation.

At this critical instant, the dead silence that reigned was broken by the war-strain of the Desmond, which burst out like a peal of thunder.

At the soul-stirring sound, Geraldine, as if she were a statue starting into life, sprung forward, clasped her father's knees, and gasping forth—"Be firm—honour!—liberty!" she raised her eyes

and gazed on the Chieftain with a wild look of fixedness, as though the grasp of death was on her.

Insensibility, that blessed oblivion of wretchedness, was denied to Geraldine. Thurles rushed to her assistance; but, with admirable presence of mind, Saunders threw himself between the lovers, and raising the Chieftain's daughter in his arms, he bore her from the chamber with the quickness of thought.

"*I will* be firm," were the Desmond's first words, while all the veins of life appeared to throw their flushing tide into his face.—"I spurn your overtures, and reject your councils. Claim not ascendancy for an apostate church, within a country where its rules were never recognized; redress the injuries that have been inflicted on this land; unite the English and the Irish into one people, and endow them with the privileges of the laws to which they are required to submit. Grant this, and peace shall reign (8) throughout the nation! Refuse it, and *I* will be the champion of Ireland! Her people shall arise to trample on the necks of their oppressors, and freedom shall be bought with blood!—This is the Desmond's answer."

"Rebel Chief, hear mine!" vociferated Ormond in a volley of wrath. "I refuse your terms, and throw defiance on your threats. If you do not

retract them, and submit within the space of four-and-twenty days, by proclamation you shall be declared a traitor !”

When Ormond, with terrible energy, had denounced this warning, he seized Lord Thurles’s arm, who clasped his hands convulsively together, and uttered a bitter exclamation of despair, as his father forced him from the audience-chamber of the Desmond.

In a few moments the Peers rejoined their suite. Indignantly rejecting the repast that had been prepared for their refreshment, the whole party mounted their horses, and proceeding at full gallop, they were many miles on their road to the metropolis before the last beams of day had rested on the mountain’s top.

It is scarcely requisite to add, that the war-strain, which produced such a remarkable effect on the individuals who were engaged in the meeting we have just described, was struck up in obedience to a secret signal that had been concerted between the minstrel and the Doctor Saunders, when the former was stationed in the room adjacent to the audience-chamber.

CHAPTER VII.

“Tyranny
Is far the worst of treasons.”

LORD BYRON.

“Why delighteth man to do what he condemneth in another?
Why doth he unto his fellow, what he would not that his fellow
should do unto him?

“The heart of man is proud. He coveteth power and pre-
eminence. He will gain them by deeds of evil.”

THE CHRONICLES OF ERI.

“Qui viene ogni altro
Valore a dimostrar: l'unico esempio
Esser degg'io di debolezza? Ah! questo
Di me non oda il mondo.”

METASTASIO.

* * * * “Rome and freedom!

I shall teach

The world to blend those words, as in the days

Before the Cæsars.”

RIENZI.

“Ah! che per tutto io veggo
Qualche ogetto funesto
Che rinfaccia a quest' alma i suoi furori!
Voi, solitari orrori
Da seguaci rimorsi
Difendete il mio cor.”

HYPSIPILE.

THE redress which the Desmond had demanded
for his country's grievances was refused, and all
hope of achieving an amicable adjustment was cut

off, when the Chieftain learned that Sir Nicholas Malby had removed to Rathkeale and established his forces there.

The town belonged to the Earl of Desmond; but, under plea of evidence of that noble's disloyalty, which it was said the papers found on Allen's person had afforded, the English General declared himself entitled to occupy it.

Exasperated at what the Chieftain deemed an act of flagrant injustice, he openly threw off all connexion with the British Crown. Avowing himself the independent champion of Ireland, the Desmond rose in arms, and, with multitudes around his standard, attacked the English camp. Enraged at the boldness of this enterprise, the Earl of Ormond, the Lords Mountgarret and Dunboyne, the Bishop of Waterford, Sir Nicholas Malby, Sir Edmund Butler, and others of the royal party, signed a proclamation, that denounced the Desmond as a traitor, (9) if, within twenty days, he did not unconditionally surrender to the Government. This declaration of the Queen's will was openly published against the Chief and all his confederates, at Rathkeale, on the 2d of November, 1579. A few hours after the Earl of Desmond was thus proclaimed, he erected his standard at Ballyhowry, in the county of Cork;

and subsequently appeared before the walls of Youghall, which he entered at the head of a numerous army, who plundered the town, and were victorious in putting to the sword a detachment that had been sent by Ormond to recover and defend the place.

This success intoxicated the Chief of Desmond to such a degree, that, in the triumph of the moment, he wrote an arrogant letter to the Lord Justice, declaring that, under the authority of the Pope, and the protection of the King of Spain, he and his friends had entered into the defence of catholicism, and had espoused a just and holy cause, in which Sir William Pelham was invited to co-operate. Letters of similar import were despatched to the nobles and gentlemen of Leinster, who were suspected of a desire to curb the executive power of the Pale. Many of these individuals had long reprobated the measures of the existing administration, consequently the coalition that was sought was effected with the Lord Baltinglass, and several other nobles both of the English and Irish race, who, at the sacrifice of much personal interest, united to promote the principles in which they coincided. That greatest of all calamities, a national war, now raged throughout the country. Crime and violence were perpetrated by both the

parties who were unhappily engaged in it, and Ireland became the frightful scene of blood and havoc, despair and death.

The prescribed limits of this work render it impossible for us to enter into a minute detail of all the terrible contentions which occurred during the political struggles that were in movement through the country. We must pass over

“ Time and numbers, and the due course of things,
Which cannot in their huge and proper life
Be here presented.”

But as a few of the particular incidents (10) which occurred are closely connected with the history of Ireland, as well as with that of the principal personages of our narrative, it is necessary to offer a sketch of those events which produced the most material influences on the fate of both.

For a short period, fortune seemed to favour the Earl of Desmond and his countrymen; but distress and humiliation soon followed the delusive success they had achieved, when in the first burst of bravery and confidence they took the field.

The Earl of Ormond, who had been appointed Governor of Munster, at the head of a considerable army, attacked and slew four hundred of the Desmond's forces, destroyed his territories, fired

his towns, conquered many of his fortresses, and entering the principality of Desmond, burned all the land, as far as the mountains of Slievelogher. The Castle of Carrick-a-foyle was next besieged. (11) Here a vigorous resistance was made, but in vain. The fortress was stormed, the garrison put to the sword, the few unfortunate men who escaped that fate, suffered by martial law, and Julio, an Italian officer, who had commanded at Carrick-a-foyle, was executed. Panic-struck at the rigorous cruelty of this indiscriminate slaughter, and terrified at the prospect of famine which threatened them, the forces stationed in the Desmond's castles of Askeaton and Ballylohane abandoned their posts to the ascendant party.

This cowardly desertion drove daggers into the soul of the lofty and intrepid Desmond; and before he recovered the stab, a still deeper one was inflicted by the hand of ingratitude. Saunders, who, when every worldly danger had arrayed itself against him, found a refuge in the house and heart of the Chief of Desmond, was the first to forsake his generous patron in the hour of peril and distress. The moment fortune changed, he abandoned the man who had protected him at the risk of property and life; and determining to consult nothing but his own selfish interests, the Doctor

Saunders accompanied Sir John of Desmond, in order to seek the protection of Lord Baltinglass. The intended enterprise was not accomplished; for a party of the Queen's troops encountered the miscreants, seized some of their train, and obliged the principals to save their lives by a precipitate retreat.

With heroic firmness, the Desmond met these strokes of adversity. As the dangers which lowered over him deepened, the more undaunted his resolution became. With a magnanimity that forced admiration even from his enemies, and which might be almost termed sublime, the Irish Chief invariably courted the post of toil and danger. Wherever life stood the greatest peril, there, with invincible bravery, he breasted it, presenting a glorious example of heroic valour and patient suffering. No achievement was too daring for his courage. No privation too severe for his endurance. His noble spirit never quailed beneath defeat. It trampled upon danger as long as the slightest chance of success remained; and the dreadful conviction that the measures which had been planned for the salvation of Ireland, would ultimately become the means of her destruction, was slowly admitted to the mind of the Lord of Desmond. He tried to cling to hope even after she had

fled; and it was not until almost every probability of success had vanished, that the Irish patriot opened his eyes to the realities that surrounded him, and covered the land he loved, with the darkness of despair. The fields which had once been green as the emerald, were now died in blood, and disfigured with the smoking remains of the huts of the wretched peasantry, whose habitations had been mercilessly burned to the ground. Their former inmates, deprived of property and home, were wandering round the spot which had been the scene of their happiness, gazing, with the maniac glances of despair, upon the smouldering ruins, in which their little all had been consumed. Others, still more miserable, called in frenzied accents on the relatives whom they had lost, muttering fearful curses on the heads of those who had bereaved them of their nearest and their dearest friends. Every living creature looked as if compelled to move within the same circle of error and of misery. The old, and the young, the high, and the low, the rich, and the poor, appeared sullenly to catch the infection of that anguish and disgust, which left no room within their breasts for any other passion, excepting the insatiable desire for vengeance, that was written upon every brow, and which with one terrible impulse governed every heart.

Agonizing was now the conflict of the Desmond's mind. The enthusiasm on which his heart had fed, was chilled and disenchanted by repeated disappointments. The rainbow hues of hope were vanishing away, as reflection succeeded to that effervescence of the soul, which produced those bright illusions; and the energy of the Desmond's mind reacted on itself. Poignant were the pangs he then experienced; for the cry of the wretched smote upon his heart like the wail of accusing spirits.

His profound and disinterested attachment to his country, made him but more exquisitely feel the dangers that encompassed her. At times his confidence in Heaven remained unshaken; but more frequently he was obliged to own the awful truth, that a gallant army of his dearest friends had been sacrificed to a project which, he began to fear, must meet an end he could not trust his lips to utter. This idea weighed upon his heart, and tore it with distraction and remorse. Never for an instant did he question the holy justice of the cause, in defence of which he would have died with joy. But when he thought upon the precious blood which had been shed and wasted, and saw the fainting people, whom he strove to arm with hope, falling by thousands into the

bosom of that spot of earth for which they vainly perished; when the brave spirits that he loved disappeared from his side, and vanished like the day-dreams of his patriotic visions; when he gazed on the moveless countenances that once with glowing looks of faith had turned to him for aid, and whereupon still rested the last strong expression of a courage which even the touch of death could not efface; then—then it was, that utter anguish fell on the heart of the self-accusing Chief of Desmond! Then would he clasp his hands, and weep the scalding tears of remorse, as the past arose to memory in its real colours, and the future seemed to stand before him, darkened with still deeper shades.

A thousand times the Earl cursed the fatal moment when his sanguine love for Ireland had tempted him to form that mistaken calculation of her strength, which had led him to plunge the country he adored into an abyss of desolation. A thousand times did he implore the pardon of Heaven for the infatuation of his mad career, and pray that all its fearful consequences might fall in single ruin on his aged head. Dreadful as were those feelings, there were others which shot even more thrilling pangs through the breast of the distracted Desmond. Language must not, can-

not strive to paint the strong agony of his heart, when he thought upon the fate which probably awaited his wife and daughter. Geraldine's heroic endurance of evil, and noble magnanimity of spirit, had supported the Chieftain under all his late vicissitudes; her presence gave light to his soul; she was the stay of his age, the companion of his thoughts, and the comforter of his sorrows; for, like the angel in Beer-shebah's wilderness, she imparted heavenly soothing in the hour of despair. This touching abandonment of self, this unshrinking fortitude, at first relieved the poignancy of Desmond's self-upbraidings; but as trials and misfortunes thickened round him, the feelings which had been the solace of his life became the sources of his bitterest anguish. The more he saw cause to worship the perfections of his daughter's character, the more agonizing was the thought, that he was doomed to entail destruction upon her and all around him. It was then he felt the iron enter into a soul, which laboured with the burden of a husband's and a parent's anguish. This state of mind was perfectly insupportable. The Desmond knew that the English, in a recent action, had inflicted absolute destruction on their foes, and had given a universal and a vital shock to the cause of Ireland; she bled at every pore,

and, totally exhausted from an intestine and unequal contest, lay almost at the mercy of her victors. This terrible conviction was associated in the Chieftain's thoughts with other feelings, which drove him into frenzy, and filled up the catalogue of misery and despair.

Through what he deemed an authentic channel, the Desmond learned that Elizabeth had threatened to imbrue her hand in the blood of his son, if he (the Earl) did not instantly renounce his seditious projects, and evince his allegiance to the government of the Pale, by submitting unreservedly to its authority. The Chieftain's soul was stricken with horror by this intelligence. In imagination, he saw the mangled corpse of his murdered boy, and he shuddered at the hideous vision. He felt that the fatal hour was fast approaching, when his wife and Geraldine—that daughter whom he loved with an intenseness which men seldom feel—would be thrust out, in destitution, on the world—as outcasts from the ties of kindred and of home. He turned and looked upon those objects of his love; earth had nothing half so dear, so lovely in his eyes. He thought of the desolation which was hanging over the young lives of both his children, and in the impulse of the desperation that fell upon his heart, he formed

the sudden resolve of offering himself to England as an atonement for the ruin he had caused—as an oblation for the miseries of others. This self-sacrifice the Desmond thought must deprecate the wrath of Elizabeth; in doing which, he hoped to save his family from destruction, and to pour the balm of peace and hope upon the wounds of Ireland. Though his haughty spirit almost broke within him at the thought, the Desmond resolved to surrender himself to the Vice-Admiral of England, under the stipulation of being immediately transmitted as a state-prisoner to Elizabeth, whose clemency for his wife, his children, and his country, he determined to implore in the presence of his Sovereign.

We have no means of pronouncing a correct opinion on the nature of the Earl's intentions as to the line of conduct he eventually meant to pursue, should after-circumstances endow him with the power of influencing his individual destiny. The determinations he had formed on this point were known only to his God. Weak minds depend on the resources of others; strong ones act upon their own. The Desmond was not an ordinary character. He felt the necessity of instant exertion, and he resolved that his conduct should be prompt and decisive. A thousand reasons conspired to deter him

from confiding his project to Geraldine, or to any other human being. Pride, his besetting sin, would not permit him to make an application to Elizabeth through the agency of Ormond or his son. The Earl, therefore, secretly pursued his plan upon a sea of danger, with no pilot but his own distracted reason to guide him through the storms that raged around; and before a living creature was aware of his design, (except the Countess, who by accident discovered it,) the Desmond made an overture of self-surrender to the British Admiral, Sir William Winter, under the proviso of "being conveyed a prisoner into England, that he might supplicate the royal mercy at the foot of the throne."

This proposal, not agreeing with the Queen's stipulated terms of unconditional submission, was decidedly rejected!

* More correctly, Sir William Winter - the British Vice-Admiral, who, in 1588, commanded the R.N. ship *The Revenge* in the great fight against the Spanish Armada, 1588 - under Admiral Drake -

CHAPTER VIII.

“ It was a fearful sight to see
 Such high resolve and constancy,
 In form so soft and fair.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Marina. “ I wished to speak to you of *him*.
Doge. “ *Your husband ?*”

THE TWO FOSCARI.

“ She look’d—and in one look condensed
 The buried anguish of a broken heart;
 Her white lips feebly parted, then reclosed
 For ever. * * * * * *

DEATH OF CORINNE.

* * * * *
 “ What accents pierced him deeper yet than those !
 ’T was tidings, by his English messenger,
 Of Constance—brief and terrible they were.”

T. CAMPBELL.

WE have frequently had occasion to notice the singular mixture of strength and weakness, and the conflict of good and evil qualities, that pervaded the character of Lady Desmond. Therefore, the profound secrecy she observed on ascer-

taining that her Lord had made an overture of self-surrender to Sir William Winter, which was rejected; and the design she planned in consequence of that accidental discovery, were perfectly consistent with the general tone of a mind, which though in some respects perverted from its natural conformation, could evince extreme vigour when any event of vital importance awoke those innate sensibilities, that a pernicious education, and habitual self-indulgence, had failed to eradicate: at such times, emotion broke forth with striking impetuosity, kindling and invigorating those latent principles of action, which, in particular situations, seemed to work a sudden transformation in her character and sentiments. Feeling convinced that absolute destruction was impending over herself and every member of her family, the Lady Desmond formed the following decision:—she determined to go to the English camp, which, stationed on the mountains of Slievemish, lay at no great distance from Tralee, and resolved to present herself before the Lord Justice Pelham, in order to supplicate a pardon for the Desmond, (12) whose danger seemed to have reached its climax, in his late transaction with the British admiral; for, as the twenty days of grace granted in the royal proclamation had expired a

few hours after the Chieftain's overture to Winter had been made and refused, it was but too probable that the Earl would instantly become an object of inexorable vengeance to the English Crown, and that every measure would be taken to destroy his life.

Though dreadfully agitated by this thought, the Countess concealed her perturbation from our heroine. Her scheme was no sooner formed than executed ; and, without having created a shadow of suspicion among the inhabitants of the Castle, Lady Desmond contrived to leave it privately on horseback, at the dawn of day, accompanied only by an old and confidential servant.

After having encountered some trifling difficulties, which the money that was liberally distributed by her attendant soon removed, the Countess arrived at the mountains of Slieve-mish.

When she drew near the English camp, she could perceive that large bodies of the soldiery were grouped at one particular spot, from whence a low, dull hum proceeded. As the travellers approached, the noise grew louder, and sounded like the indistinct vociferation of a single voice, which, exerted to its highest pitch, appeared to issue from a man, who was faintly discernible, standing on a sort of temporary stage, that raised him high above the crowd of figures thronged around him.

A vague and undefinable alarm seized the Countess, and involuntarily she urged her horse to its full speed, nor stopped until she reached the British lines ; there she halted to recover breath, and in that momentary pause, the voice which now rose shrill and distinctly, gave to her ear the words of the fatal proclamation, that, without one saving clause, denounced her husband as a traitor, and offered a large reward and pension to any individual who should bring in his head. (13)

Frenzied with sudden horror, the Countess threw herself from her saddle, with the air of a maniac darted by the astonished sentinel, and flew across the camp. With that sagacity which anguish, like insanity, sometimes can adopt, she instantly distinguished the Lord Deputy, as he stood near, surrounded by his staff ; and, bounding forward—every feeling of her mind condensed in one absorbing thought—she rushed into Sir William's presence, and falling on her knees before him, amid tears and stifling sobs, she gasped forth,—“ Mercy for the Desmond ! Pardon—pardon for my husband ! ”

The beauty of the suppliant, her unexpected appearance, and the agony of her appeal, took the Lord Deputy completely by surprise. Though somewhat austere by nature, Pelham was strongly touched. Ejaculating a few broken exclamations

of amaze and compassion, he tried to raise the distracted Countess ; but in a paroxysm of anguish she clung to his knees, and forcibly retaining her humble posture, fixed her streaming eyes on his, and wildly reiterated her affecting prayer.

“ From my soul I pity you, but pardon cannot be extended to—”

Pelham stopped short, for a piercing shriek that burst from Lady Desmond checked his speech.

Her fingers suddenly relaxed the hold with which they had firmly grasped Sir William’s robe. Her head dropped on her breast, and the next instant she fell flat and heavily upon the ground.

In consternation the Lord Deputy upraised her in his arms. He gazed upon a corpse. The Lady Desmond was no more ! Her life had reached its limits ; the irrevocable sentence had gone forth, and death, scarcely inflicting a struggle or a pang, had sent her spirit to it’s everlasting rest. No time had been allowed to breathe one parting word to the mourners she had left, and her soul, almost at the moment when it pleaded for her husband to an earthly judge, had passed into the presence of the Mighty Being who decides the fate of quick and dead.

The tumult which this incident produced

throughout the camp is not to be described. Medical assistance was procured, and whatever the kindest zeal could dictate was immediately performed, but in vain. The old clansman of the Desmond, who, through the whole of this short scene, had been stupified by consternation, could now scarcely credit its result; and when, at length, the fatal truth was forced on his conviction, a burst of tears, which suddenly rolled down his furrowed cheek, bespoke the reality of grief, and created strong commiseration in the hearts of the spectators.

Sir William Pelham, having summoned the wives of two of the English serjeants, committed the body of the Countess into their especial care, directing that it should be instantly removed to a small uninhabited house, that stood on the confines of the camp. In obedience to the orders of the Lord Deputy, a party of soldiers then procured a bier, and placing the corpse upon it, prepared to proceed to the cottage that had been named. The faithful servant of the deceased threw his mantle over the form of his lamented mistress, and, with a look of piteous distress, walked close beside it, as the group moved slowly onwards to the place of destination.

As soon as they were out of sight, Sir William retired to his tent. Instinctively giving way to a

natural sympathy, which for the moment conquered political antipathy, and almost forgetting that he addressed the man for whose life, the previous hour, he had tranquilly heard a reward proposed, Pelham wrote a letter to the Earl of Desmond, in which the recent melancholy event was feelingly imparted.

A short time after this was done, the Lord Deputy caused the late Countess's attendant to be brought into his presence. Having assured him that, until orders were received for their removal, every respect should be paid to the remains of the departed, Sir William consigned his letter to the care of the aged servitor, enjoining him not to deliver it to his Chief, until he had endeavoured to prepare him for the mournful contents.

Obedience to this injunction was promised by the individual who received it; and bowing respectfully, he left the tent. A few moments afterwards, the messenger of woe commenced his journey homewards. Though he rode at full gallop, night had closed in when he approached the gates of Desmond Castle. Every thing denoted alarm and confusion. Torches were seen glancing to and fro, in different directions; and before our horseman had crossed the drawbridge, he received innumerable statements of the absence of the Countess,

and was assailed by as many questions respecting his own knowledge of her fate. A single sentence was sufficient to reveal it to the astonished household of the Chief. As is frequently the case, on similar occasions, consternation and anxiety prevented the adoption of those precautionary measures which ought to have been pursued in breaking the calamitous intelligence to those most interested in its communication. With reckless haste the Desmond's clansmen ran into the castle. The increased bustle occasioned by their rush into the hall, attracted the attention of the Chief, who, just returned from having scoured the country in quest of his lost Countess, was in the act of apprising Geraldine of the fruitless issue of his search previous to another, which he was on the point of undertaking. The augmented tumult filling the agitated husband with a thousand hopes and fears, he darted to the chamber-door, and, throwing it open, abruptly encountered the bearer of Sir William Pelham's letter. The Desmond caught a glance of the fatal packet, and, without speaking a syllable, he snatched it from the trembling hands that scarcely seemed to have power to hold it; then retreating into his apartment, he slammed the door, and, tearing open the letter, cast a rapid eye over the first page of its contents. Scarcely had

he done so, when dropping his head on his clasped hands, which crushed the paper that they grasped, the Earl staggered against an adjacent pillar, and, uttering a fearful groan, pressed his forehead to the marble from which he received support.

“In mercy, tell me what has happened!” cried Geraldine, flying to the assistance of her father, and circling her arms about him, as in overwhelming anxiety, and in a half-articulate voice, she repeated the question.

After the pause of a moment, the Desmond raised his head, and turned slowly round. His face was frightfully pale, and there was a forced expression of unnatural calmness on his rigid features. He sunk into a chair, and seemed unable to articulate one word, but presenting the letter to his daughter, he silently intimated his desire that she should read it.

Trembling with alarm, Geraldine seized and eagerly perused the paper. She started, turned deadly white, and drawing a long, deep breath, she faltered out—“My poor, poor father!” And flung herself upon his neck.

The Chieftain raised his eye, which seemed to dwell on vacancy, so frozen was its glance.—“*She is dead!*” broke from his lips. The words were few and simple, but the low sepulchral tone

in which they fell upon the ear, spoke one expression—the intenseness of grief.

“Try to bear this trial, dearest father, try to bear it,” cried the agitated Geraldine, straining the Chief still closer to her sympathizing breast.

“Yes; but, the blow is here—I feel it *here*!” murmured the Earl, laying his hand upon his heart. His quivering voice assumed a tone of acute agony. The next instant, as if determined upon self-control, the Desmond, in an accent hoarse from the effort which he made, exclaimed: “Now, now, my children, and my country, are my only ties! Leave me, dearest—leave me! I wish to be alone.”

In such a moment of sacred excitement, Geraldine felt that even her presence was intrusive. Therefore, testifying her sympathy only by an emphatic pressure of her hand, as she withdrew it from the Desmond, she complied with his desire by retreating to her chamber, where a flood of tears relieved the fulness of emotion.

CHAPTER IX.

“ The better days of life were our’s,
The worst can be but mine ;
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep,
I envy now too much to weep,
Nor need I to repine,
That all those charms have pass’d away :
I might have watch’d through long decay.”

LORD BYRON.

“ I’ll never
Be such a gosling to obey instinct ; but stand
As if a man were author of himself,
And knew no other kin.”

CORIOLANUS.

IN torture of mind, the Earl issued those directions which the recent mournful event had rendered necessary. By his order, the body of his once beautiful partner had been removed to the vaults of his ancestors ; he had listened to the dismal *Keenan* (14) that was raised in lamentation over it. He had heard the earth rattle

on the coffin. He had stood by the grave as it closed and darkened over the remains of the departed, shutting out for ever from his view the last memorial of the loveliness which death had changed to dust !

Intense was the agony with which the Desmond saw that sight of woe. Then memory and despair returned together ; for thoughts of the happy hours that were gone, rose fresh and unimpaired, as if in mockery of present grief. Fond associations revived, which were increased tenfold, when the Chief reflected, that the noble act which filled his soul with gratitude to his lamented wife, appeared the main cause of his late bereavement.

Death, "the mighty mediator," banished the remembrance of the Lady Desmond's faults, and threw the veil of a generous oblivion over all her errors, while it heightened the recollection of her virtues, and rent the bleeding heart in which their memories were enshrined. Under the melting influence of such sensations, every forbidding image fled, and the tenderness which flowed for the departed one, carried away, in the full tide of its emotions, all thoughts but those to which affection would not wish to teach forgetfulness.

It was fortunate for the Chieftain, that the critical exigencies of the times imperatively called

on him to sacrifice private feeling upon the altar of public duty. The appeal was not made in vain, for the Desmond loved his country better than himself; therefore, as soon as the first great shock was over, he determined, instead of yielding to the supineness of an unavailing sorrow, to suppress its demonstration, and to endeavour to resist the weight of despondency which had been cast upon his spirit.

Notwithstanding the gloomy prospects of the future, the Chief still trusted that bold and vigorous deeds would be performed which might eventually tell upon the destinies of Ireland in promoting her interests. He felt deeply the succession of cruel disappointments, lately given to his political hopes, yet fearless, sanguine, and energetic by nature, and acting in obedience to the principle by which he had resolved to shape his conduct, the Earl laboured to conceal his agitations, even when he could not silence his solitudes. Though fully sensible of the perilous situation of public affairs, he endeavoured to inspire the dejected with confidence, and to dispel the fears of the weak and timorous. The secret feelings of distress peculiar to himself, were endured without a murmur by the Desmond; while, inspired by an energy adapted to the exigencies of the case, he issued every order which

promised the slightest chance of averting the dangers that beset his country.

The destruction with which Ireland was threatened, seemed partially suspended by some flattering intelligences, which were privately conveyed to the Earl of Desmond from a high private source. It required but few arguments to revive an ardent enthusiasm, that had resisted the pressure of the severest calamities ; and no sooner did those favourable reports reach his ear, than, in conjunction with a band of bold and desperate associates, the adventurous Chief, struggling with every distress in which the English Government tried to involve him, held on his perilous career, not only with fortitude, but with hope.

Under the influence of these stirring pursuits, the Desmond's mind gradually recovered its original tone, and his faculties returned to their accustomed force. His confidence in the justness of his cause became greater than ever, and he undauntedly continued those measures, which, sanguine in hope, he trusted would accelerate the long-expected hour of his country's deliverance.

In the tumultuous duties attendant on the execution of these desperate designs, the Earl of Desmond found an excitement of the mind, that was calculated to obliterate the losses of the heart.

Thus it is with man ; almost at the moment when he suffers, he asks for action, and derives from it forgetfulness. For, public occupation, bringing the various passions of human nature into play, furnishes a thousand different channels, through which the workings of the mind may be poured forth.

But it is not so with woman ; when she truly loves and suffers, she knows that the auxiliaries of the present cannot harden or erase a single record of the past. To her affection, that devotedness belongs, which refuses to yield to momentary impulse, because it possesses a definite, profound, and engrossing character, which external agencies leave steadfast and unchanged.

Of this the Desmond and the Lady Geraldine were striking proofs :—*He* looked for a stimulus to force forgetfulness of former joy and present sorrow ;—and he found it. She, loving as woman alone *can* love ; drew no obliteration from circumstance,—no vacillation from worldly collision,—no clouding of the memory from outward influence. There was a fixedness in her affection for Lord Thurles, which sought not to be replaced by any other sentiment. Nothing could dissipate the early visions of her love, or efface its later recollections, which though more sad, were equally enthralling.

Yet deep, and dear, and fervent as were those feelings, they could never superinduce that callous indifference to the state of others, which the feeble and the selfish show, when suffering is their portion.

In the fulness of sympathy, Geraldine had sustained her father's mind beneath affliction; and when sorrow subsided into sadness, and that sadness was succeeded by composure, she successfully exerted all her influence to lead him to those occupations that were calculated to confirm his physical and mental strength.

Though our heroine's character partook strongly of the enthusiastic ardour which marked the Desmond's temperament, yet naturally gifted with uncommon powers of thought, which had been roused to extraordinary exertion, and had acquired peculiar vigour and enlargement through a continued operation of moral causes, her mind took a truer estimate of the real and complex state of existing circumstances, than the heated imagination of the Chief permitted him to form. Hence, Geraldine, less duped by the delusions of hope than her father, felt the most alarming doubts as to the result of his political proceedings; but, unwilling to damp his expectations, and knowing that the expression of her fears could produce no beneficial consequences, she studiously concealed her ap-

prehensions. In vain she called off her mind from dwelling on the miseries of her country, in the hope of drawing comfort from the prospects of her love. They were still more inauspicious, for every hour seemed to lengthen the chain of separation between her and the object of her tenderest attachment. Bitter as those convictions were, it was only in the secrecy of solitude that the heart they swayed let forth its feelings. The present gave no solace, the future was still more cheerless ; but there were gleams of the past which, refusing to depart, glowed through the gloom, and lightened the depths of sorrow.

In looking back with the eye of fond remembrance on the scenes and images of other days, Geraldine, amid all her grief, found melancholy consolation ; for, at such times, it seemed as if a former state of being was renewed, in which Lord Thurles's spirit held communion with her own. The retrospect was clouded. But it was sorrow, not repentance ; suffering, not remorse, that cast a shade upon its annals ; for her love was innocent—we might say, almost holy. Its emotions were intense but sinless—its associations were mournful, yet there was a rapture in their sadness. But we must not linger on these youthful dreams of purity and love. *They* whose hearts have beat high with the

hopes, or swelled with the fears of the tenderest of the passions, can imagine its sensations, with far greater truth than we could paint them. Those who have never loved would fail to understand its attributes, or to sympathize with its emotions even if we had the power to express feelings which in themselves are—*inexpressible*.

CHAPTER X.

“ Com’ è fallace e vana
Le speme degli amanti!”

GUARINI.

“ Yet was there light around her brow,
A holiness on those dark eyes,
Which show’d—though wandering earthward now—
Her spirit’s home was in the skies.”

LALLA ROOKH.

“ The magic of affection
Shall trace her sacred ring,
And charm away defection,
And hope’s enchantment bring.”

“ Ah, quel passaggio è questo !—Io dalle stelle,
Precipito agli abissi * *
* * Ah ! senza te la vita
Per me vita non è.”

OLIMPIADE.

ONE of our most elegant moralists has said, that calamities may improve into blessings. The truth of this aphorism was instanced in the case of Lady

Geraldine Fitzgerald. The uses of adversity had acted as correctives to those errors which nature, education, and practice, had incorporated into the mass of her habitudes and feelings. Sad experience had taught her the dangers that attend the excesses of an ungoverned sensibility and an uncontrolled imagination. She had gradually become impressed with a sense of the necessity of bringing into subjection those impetuous emotions, which, if not placed under proper regulations, vitally injure the health of the mind ; and applying that principle to the discipline of her affections, Geraldine had made a slow but continual progress in the great arts of self-knowledge and self-government.

Thus, a life of constant suffering had produced the most beneficial effects in the improvement of our heroine's character ; for misfortune, under Divine guidance, had had the happy power of giving a right direction to that ardent temperament which imbued the original conformation of her mind. She had gradually gained a habit of command over her feelings, and her mind, strengthened and animated in the practice of truth, acquired a wholesome vigour, without losing the enthusiasm and sensibility which were its original features.

This Christian heroism raised the character of

Geraldine above the ordinary weaknesses of the female mind, and enabled her to support the unexpected shock that she received in the intelligence of Lady Desmond's death, and on learning the Desmond's proposal of surrender to Sir William Winter, and its rejection.

True courage leads to promptitude of action and to resolution of thought. Though entirely divested of that masculine spirit, which of all faults is the least endurable in woman, Geraldine possessed the glorious capability of evincing firmness under the keenest assaults of danger, for her mental strength was founded on the only sure foundation,—a reliance in the mercy and the wisdom of Almighty God.

It was *this* that enabled her to drink the cup of misery, even to its last dregs of bitterness, with soul-devoted resignation; and though it may not be denied that her apprehensions were extreme, yet the power of a practical trust in Providence gave balm to the wounds within her, and, in governing her thoughts, disciplined her conduct.

Woman seems created to bear the sufferings of life with greater fortitude than man. Natural sensibility renders her peculiarly susceptible to the influence of pious affections; and these, in directing her actions, afford the supports of religion

under the pressure of domestic misfortunes. Perhaps, too, the early schooling of the heart, and that control and concealment of its warmest feelings which the conventional forms of society require in woman, may have some share in producing a power of submission under those disappointments which often condense the whole history of her existence. Be this as it may, the assertion will scarcely be disputed, that as in the possession of active courage the stronger exceeds the weaker sex; so in passive courage,—that patience under sorrow which sustains the sufferer in the path of duty,—woman surpasses man; for, notwithstanding her natural softness, does not the former generally evince a fortitude in distress, which the latter, with sterner sensibilities, and more enlarged resources of mind, often fails to exert when assailed by the vicissitudes of human life?

Thus it was with Thurles. The result of the interview which took place between Lord Ormond and the Chieftain of Desmond, had struck our hero's heart with consternation and dismay. At first, all his feelings were too deeply wounded to allow him to act with any degree of self-possession. It appeared as if his dearest hopes were shipwrecked, for it seemed as though the anchor where they had found rest was torn away. Banished from the

sight of Geraldine, condemned to the severe sentence of a separation that might prove eternal, life was as a blank to Thurles; and giving way to his emotions, he had almost sunk beneath their weight in the first wild moments of despair. But his was not a mind that could remain inactive, while a single chance remained which promised to revive its fading hopes. Therefore, notwithstanding the appalling reminiscences which crowded to his recollection, the Viscount rallied his mental strength, and, armed with resolution, determined to overcome the obstacles that barred him out from happiness and Geraldine.

These intensely interesting anticipations partially turned his ideas from the present to the future, and in doing so, relieved his bosom from a portion of the cares that overcharged it. Filled with sanguine thoughts, and guided by them, our hero had lingered in the neighbourhood of Desmond Castle. As soon as respect for the memory of the departed Countess permitted the application, Thurles besought the Chief to grant another interview, trusting that the objection which had arisen in their last would vanish before expedients that the lover's ardent mind had since suggested, and in the success of which he reposed some confidence. The Desmond had refused to comply with the

Viscount's request. In defiance of repeated denials to entreaties of a similar kind, the anxious Thurles continued his applications for a meeting ; but the Earl was inexorable, and our hero's persevering efforts were doomed to disappointment. Pierced to the heart at the failure of his wishes, the despairing lover, as a last resource, embodied his troubled thoughts on paper. In a letter, which was by turns equally touching, eloquent, and impassioned, Thurles addressed the Lady Geraldine, and implored her to allow him a secret meeting. He wrote from the impulse of his soul, and the energetic sentiments that possessed it were vividly expressed in lines which were destined not to reach the hand of her for whom they were intended. By one of those untoward accidents which so frequently cross the lover's path, Lord Thurles's epistle was lost ; and the substance of it being thus uncommunicated to our heroine, the writer's eager wishes to obtain an answer were of course ungratified.

There was madness in the thought, that the affection on which Thurles had reposed his all of earthly happiness, could decay. The cherished images, the blissful memories of the past, forbade the supposition that a love like Geraldine's could be lost in the rush of late occurrences ; and yet the

unspeakable relief which that idea gave, faded into despondency when days lagged on and on, without bringing consolation in their course.

This state of "hope deferred" was insupportable, and Thurles was about to attempt the bold exploit of gaining an interview with the Desmond's daughter, either by force or stratagem, when he received an order from his commanding officer to join the royal army in an enterprise which did not admit of an instant's delay. Implicit obedience to such a mandate was indispensable; it was yielded by our hero, who, resolving to return to Desmond Castle the moment circumstances allowed him to do so, proceeded with all possible speed to meet the Queen's forces.

Notwithstanding Geraldine's ignorance of the efforts which Thurles had made to gain an audience with the Desmond or herself, she had in a great degree escaped the miseries of doubting love. For, though from motives of prudence the Chieftain deemed it requisite to conceal the Viscount's recent importunities from his daughter; yet parental affection led him to endeavour to restore tranquillity to her feelings by any means which did not include the necessity of acknowledging her lover's repeated applications for an

interview. With the exception of concealment on that point, the Desmond acted towards his daughter with the candour and affection of the fondest father. Their intercourse of heart grew more and more unrestrained, as every hour some new circumstance drew still closer the ties that bound them to each other. The conversations which frequently occurred between the Chief and Geraldine, were fraught with interest; and on such occasions the influence of the latter reigned absolutely paramount. During the course of one of those confidential interviews, in which a community of thought and feeling had been particularly displayed, Geraldine, for the first time, ventured to ask some questions respecting the conduct that had been pursued by the delegates of England, in the audience-chamber of Desmond Castle.

The gross exaggerations and deceptions that had been practised by Doctor Saunders, were unveiled in the candid reply of the Chief, who hesitated not to exonerate Lord Thurles from the aspersions which the artful Jesuit had endeavoured to affix upon his character and conduct.

A spark of joy glanced over the beautiful countenance of the daughter of Desmond, and her lip

quivered with the emotion of gratified affection, when she learned, from her father's statement, that *he* on whose attachment her whole soul reposed, had justified her sentiments by a reciprocity of feeling, and a manly tenderness, which satisfied all the demands of her heart. That troubled heart was then consoled for the absence of those sources of happiness, which a union with its chosen object would have given. Love elevates to enthusiasm. Even the darkness of Geraldine's fate received illumination from a ray of that passion, which now formed her chief glory. The developement of the feelings, instead of weakening her character, caused it to respond to those ennobling emotions of nature, which are the surest indications of a real and imperishable love—that love which in exalted souls sanctifies the temple where it dwells, and, by the full force of its enchantment, wakens hope amidst sorrow; seeming to contract Heaven with earth, when, soaring above terrestrial images, it darts into futurity, and ventures to anticipate the glorious moment that shall eternally unite the beatified spirits of the “just made perfect,” at the throne of God.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Oh! Heaven! he cried, my bleeding country save!—
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?
Yet, though destruction sweep these lovely plains,
Rise, fellow-men! our country yet remains!
By that dread name, we wave the sword on high!
And swear for her to live!—with her to die!”—

T. CAMPBELL.

“ The miserable have no other medicine
But only hope.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“ I have heard of murderers who have interr'd
Their victims; but ne'er heard, until this hour,
Of so much splendour in hypocrisy
O'er those they slew.”

THE TWO FOSCARI.

THE struggles which Ireland underwent in her arduous contests with the British power, so con-

siderably weakened her resources, that at length even the boldest champions of her cause were compelled to deem it nearly lost. The efforts which had been made for the emancipation of the country, had served only to confirm the authority of its rulers, and to bind the bond of subjugation still closer round the people it enchained. But though the hopes of success were overawed, they were not even yet resigned. The general temper of the Irish is essentially bold and ardent. Their's is a spirit difficult to crush, but easy to excite. A sparkle of hope will kindle it into a flame, which the severest system of control may fail to quench.

This truth was evidenced at the era we describe. Notwithstanding the serious check which their dearest expectations had received, and the arbitrary measures that were taken to silence farther opposition, the Irish cherished a burning hatred to their rulers, and encouraged a secret hope that the retaliating vengeance of an injured people might still prevail.

When the Desmond had lately undertaken to act on this idea, it seemed absolutely wild and chimerical ; but one of those unexpected turns of fortune which mark the features of every history, suddenly occurred in that of Ireland, to reanimate

her national spirit, and to chafe it into fresh resistance.

Arthur Lord Grey had been appointed Lord Deputy of the Island. Ignorant of the character of the people and the country with whose management he was entrusted, and resolved to bring the Irish wars to a speedy termination, Grey, even before he received the sword of Government, was ready to propose and to attempt the most hazardous enterprises.

When it was known that this spirit of adventure in the new Lord Deputy was allied to a total want of knowledge in the service he had undertaken, the majority of the Irish felt assured, that if they could muster a sufficient army to oppose a rash and inexperienced commander, victory would lead them on to glory; and acting under this conviction, many who had hitherto stood neuter joined the common cause.

At this important juncture, Lord Baltinglass privately visited the proscribed Desmond, and delivered a proposal from the Chief of the O'Briens, which invited the Earl to take a prominent station among the forces who were posted in the valley of Glendalough, for the purpose of opposing the new successor of Sir William Pelham.

The Desmond eagerly embraced an offer that

promised to break the thraldom that galled his impetuous spirit, and which held forth a prospect most favourable to the furtherance of his political views.

Having placed his daughter under the protection of the Lady Baltinglass, the Chieftain escaped to the county of Wicklow, where he found several of the principal Irish Chiefs, and a considerable body of soldiers occupying the defile of Glendalough. This steep and thickly wooded valley was singularly suitable to the designs of the Irish, who, having determined to adopt their old practice of assailing the English from an ambuscade, secreted a large body of men among the trees and rocks of the glen. In the heat of a sharp skirmish, these concealed foes poured a flight of arrows and a sudden volley of stones upon the English army. The British soldiers had to contend with an open, daring, and undaunted enemy, as well as with a hidden one who might be termed almost equally formidable. Spent with the fatigue of encountering the difficulties that nature presented in the perplexing situation of the place of combat, and overpowered by valour which, though undisciplined, was unconquerable, the Queen's forces were compelled to retreat. Overwhelmed with dismay, mortification, and dishonour, Lord Grey,

with his cavalry, precipitately fled, and, followed by the remainder of his troops, the defeated commander returned to Dublin, leaving the Irish masters of the field. (15)

In this decisive action, Sir Peter Carew and several officers of high distinction in the Queen's army, were slain, and the loss of eight hundred soldiers was sustained. Placing this brilliant success in opposition to their former defeats, the Irish were sanguine in the confidence of future conquest—circumstances seemed to flatter such anticipations.

The King of Spain, who still continued to nourish the most inveterate feelings against Elizabeth, no sooner heard of the progress that disaffection had made among her Irish subjects, than he resolved to avail himself of the opportunity which the disorders of a mutinous people seemed to offer, for obtaining a signal revenge over the English monarch. Philip determined to invade Ireland. He issued his royal command for that purpose. Seven hundred Spaniards and Italians were instantly dispatched with arms and ammunition for five thousand men, together with a large sum of money, which they were ordered to deliver to the Earl of Desmond. A landing was effected at Smerwick.

When this alarming intelligence reached the ears of Government, the Earl of Ormond received directions to march against the invaders. The command was instantly obeyed. In his first sally Ormond was victorious; but in a second one, he was completely routed, and compelled to retreat with great precipitation to Rathkeale. Here he was soon joined by Lord Grey. Accompanied by the Lords Ormond and Thurles, the Captains Zouch, Walter Raleigh, and others, Grey marched to Smerwick at the head of fifteen hundred men, and beleaguered Fort del Ore, while the English admiral, Sir William Winter, blocked it up by sea.

The siege lasted forty days, the place being well fortified, and the defence obstinate. Harassed by the determination of the Spaniards and their Irish auxiliaries, and seeing that the severest season of the year was fast approaching, Grey resolved to obtain by treason what he vainly tried to secure by force. He therefore despatched an emissary, who, bearing a flag of truce, demanded a parley, and proposed a capitulation of the enemy's troops; promising that the whole garrison should march out of their fort unmolested, and with all the honours of war.

Sebastian de St. Joseph at first gave a peremp-

tory denial to this offer, boldly declaring his resolution to resist the power of England, and to keep the post which he had gained. A second proposition, summoning the fort to surrender, was tried by Lord Grey, with as little success as had attended his first; but at length St. Joseph, disappointed in a reinforcement which had been expected from Spain, and knowing that it would be impossible for the besieged to hold out much longer, consented to the proposed treaty. By means of an interpreter, the negotiation was quickly brought to a close, on condition that their lives, liberties, and properties should be considered sacred; the Spaniards and their Irish allies agreed to lay down their arms, at the same time stipulating that a safe conduct to the Continent should be granted to the foreign troops. The strict performance of the articles of this capitulation was guaranteed by the oath of the Lord Grey.

On the pledge of his Lordship's word and faith, the besieged marched forth, and surrendered their swords. No sooner had this act been performed, than, with unparalleled treachery, the Spaniards, amounting to nearly nine hundred in number, were either butchered on the spot, or dashed into the sea, over the cliffs of the elevated rock which we have formerly described.

These atrocities were executed under the immediate direction and authority of Captain Walter Raleigh. He whose talents subsequently raised him to an astonishing height of favour with his Sovereign; whose artful address, aided by personal advantages, rapidly bore him onward through a splendid career of successful ambition, and who, in the meridian of his greatness, triumphed over many more deserving, though less prosperous spirits than his own—*he* it was, who carried into effect a sentence, scarcely paralleled amongst the annals of barbarism; (16) one that was politically and morally indefensible, and which left a stigma on its executor, that all his after-glories were insufficient to efface. The small remnant of eleven officers escaped the massacre, and were insultingly expelled the kingdom.

The voice of Ireland called for redress and vengeance on the actors in the tragedy, that was thus performed in the presence of the people, whom it goaded on to madness; and the advance of a political resistance was accelerated by the means which had been adopted for its subjugation.

CHAPTER XII.

“ There is a third kind of tyranny which most properly deserves that odious name, and which stands in direct opposition to royalty ; it takes place when one man, the worst, perhaps, and basest in the country, governs a kingdom with no other view than the advantage of himself and his family.”—GILLIES’S TRANSLATION OF ARISTOTLE’S POLITICS.

“ Yet has she hearts, mid all this ill,
O’er all this wreck high buoyant still
With hope and vengeance ;—hearts that yet,—
Like gems, in darkness issuing rays,
They’ve treasured from the sun that’s set,—
Beam all the light of long-lost days !”

THE FIRE-WORSHIPPERS.

“ That man of crime
Hath ended his career of blood,
And sleeps the sleep of death.”

THE period to which our narrative now refers, unfolds one of the darkest pages in the annals of

Ireland. The successes which have been recorded in the last chapter were speedily followed by famine, disease, and defeat. Rivers of blood deluged the land, and desolation and despair seemed to claim it as their own. The universal agitation of the public mind led to open insurrection as well as to secret conspiracy. Throughout the whole country, the most extravagant rumours were in circulation, which, however improbable, were accredited by those persons who were either terrified at the commotion of the times, or affected to be so, urged on to that pretence by the detestable views which regulated their political conduct.

Amid all this chaos and confusion, a report of the existence of a most alarming conspiracy suddenly arose, which was generally believed by the great authorities of the Pale. It was asserted, that the leading objects of this formidable plot were the seizure of the Lord Deputy and that of the principals of his household ; the occupation of the Castle of Dublin, and the death of every Englishman who breathed within the bounds of Ireland.

This extravagant statement was accredited by the members of the Government ; and to Lord Grey the danger appeared so imminent as to admit neither of deliberation nor delay. As an effectual

measure for stifling this dreaded plot, the Council General caused the chiefs of several distinguished Irish families to be seized and executed, on the mere suspicion of their having joined in that intrigue, the apprehension of which had occasioned such dismay.

Among the persons who were barbarously sacrificed at the order of the intemperate Grey, was Nugent, Baron of the Exchequer, a man of excellent moral conduct and unblemished reputation. Though assured of the Queen's pardon, on a disclosure of the particulars of the state conspiracy in which he was accused of being an abettor, Nugent, to the last instant of his life, persevered in protesting his perfect innocence of the crime preferred against him. But this was unavailing. The people, with astonishment and horror, beheld his execution, which was followed by that of many other equally guiltless personages.

The Earl of Kildare and the Baron of Delvin, being apprehended for sedition, were near meeting with the same ignominious death; but through the interposition of Lord Ormond they were sent into England, where, after a judicial examination, they were fully exonerated from the charge of disloyalty.

The manifold acts of violence and injustice

which disgraced the Lord Deputy's conduct, filled the Irish with indignation and rage. The whole country was in open mutiny, for the blood-thirsty deeds of Grey, and the tyrannical rigour which marked his administration in Ireland, called forth the execrations of her people, who, with one voice, demanded vengeance on the author of their wrongs.

The storm that had gathered was not to be appeased. It continued to rage from one end of Ireland to the other, desolating her fairest provinces, and spreading terror and confusion through all the rest.

Irritated nearly to madness, and accustomed daily to scenes of carnage and oppression, the Irish, with passions inflamed to such a pitch, that even the certainty of ruin could not restrain them, continued to pursue their desperate career.

Nearly all persons of note in the country were implicated in the disorders, turbulence, and political vicissitudes of the period. The enmity of the Government was practically evidenced against the Lord Roche; but after Captain Raleigh had seized and accused that noble of rebellion, his innocence was so completely proved in an investigation which was held on his conduct, that his Lordship was acquitted and dismissed. Many Chieftains of the old Milesian race, and some of the

Anglo-Irish, were imprisoned and condemned on slight and often groundless suspicions ; for the prospect of the valuable forfeitures expected on the deaths of the great landholders of the country, engendered rapacity and injustice in the hearts of those English adventurers, who were certain of being rewarded with rank and wealth, on the destruction of each opponent to the existing administration.

But the hostility of the Queen's officers was directed with peculiar force against the Earl of Desmond, whose political conduct and princely possessions marked him out as the main object of their vengeance. Large bodies of the royal troops were constantly out, in open pursuit, or in secret search, of the proscribed Chieftain. Placards were posted up in all parts of the country, offering a large reward for his capture ; but the Earl of Desmond had as yet foiled the schemes of his enemies, and on various occasions had suddenly issued out upon his foes and totally dispersed them.

Success had also partially attended Sir John of Desmond, who, having encamped his forces near Slievelogher, had defeated a party of the Lord Justice's troops. He had likewise been victorious in some skirmishes with the English, that took place in the Knight of the Glin's country, into

which one hundred and twenty of Elizabeth's army had penetrated ; eight soldiers at a time having crossed the Shannon in a small boat, (17) capable of holding only that number of persons. But on the whole, the ardour of the Irish was kept up by hope rather than success.

Lord Grey had appointed Captain Zouch to the government of Munster ; and he, accompanied by Raleigh, had left his head-quarters at Cork, to make excursions through the adjacent country, in order to reduce the mutinous spirit which its inhabitants still continued to testify.

In one of those sallies, Zouch surprised the Desmond, so unexpectedly, that the latter was forced to escape, covered only with his shirt, (18) towards the wood of Aharlow. When flying past Kilmallock, (19) which, with its magnificent abbeys and defences, had been a principal seat of his dignity and power, the unfortunate Earl was perceived by the English garrison who then occupied the place, and was chased by a body of soldiers for the length of three miles ; but the Chief contrived to gain the forest and to baffle his pursuers.

Fate was not equally propitious to Sir John of Desmond. As Zouch continued his secret expedition through the country, he gradually received

more full information concerning the aspect of its affairs, and the situation of the principal leaders of the Irish war. Conducting his operations with consummate skill, he at length succeeded in gaining intelligence of the station to which Sir John Desmond had privately retreated. Thither Captain Zouch immediately advanced with a large body of soldiers, who, surrounding the Geraldines, put them to the sword, while the English commander took Sir John of Desmond prisoner. The Pope's bulls were found on the person of the latter, as well as certain *Agnus Dei*, (20) which were deemed precious memorials by Catholic superstition. A remarkable ring of great value, that had been sent from the Pontiff's own finger, was also discovered, slung round the neck of the Irish Knight, on whom summary vengeance was immediately inflicted.

Sir John of Desmond, whose crimes well deserved the fate they met, was beheaded on the spot ; and, according to the testimony of Captain Raleigh, " his body was hanged over the gates of his native city, to be devoured by ravens." (21)

Thus ended the career of a man whose atrocious deeds stained the Irish name, and the service to which his perverted talents had been devoted.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ For every lance they raised,
Thousands around the conqueror blazed,

* * * *

A bloody, bold, and countless crowd,
Before whose swarm as fast they bow'd,
As dates beneath a locust cloud !”

MOORE.

“ He is now, nothing.
Of his own body he was ill, and gave
The clergy ill example.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“ He falls like Lucifer,
Never to hope again.”

KING HENRY VIII.

MR. Locke, in his treatise on civil government, asserts, that “ he who by conquest has a right over a man's person to destroy him if he pleases,

has not thereby a right over his estate to possess and enjoy it : for it is the brutal force the aggressor has used, that gives his adversary a right to take away his life, and destroy him if he pleases, as a noxious creature ; but it is damage sustained that alone gives him title to another man's goods. The right then of conquest extends only to the lives of those who joined in the war, not to their estates, but only in order to make reparation for the damages received, and the charges of the war, and that, too, with reservation of the right of the innocent wife and children." And again the same great writer says : " When the people are made miserable, and find themselves exposed to the ill usage of arbitrary power, cry up their governors as much as you will for sons of Jupiter ! let them be sacred and divine, descended or authorized from Heaven ; give them out for whom or for what you please, the same will happen. The people generally ill treated, and contrary to right, will be ready, upon any occasion, to ease themselves of a burden that sits heavy upon them."

If these observations be true, the spirit and events of the times we describe, will appear nothing more than natural consequences, resulting from the spurious policy, factious partialities, and sectarian bigotry that were opposed to the advance-

ment of the interests of Ireland. The exercise of power beyond justice, drove an infuriated people into anarchy, and overwhelmed them with ruin. The march of destruction proceeded at a rapid pace. The death of Sir John Desmond was followed by that of Doctor Saunders, who, after having vainly attempted to conquer the innumerable obstacles that opposed the execution of his views, expired, worn out by fatigue and want. Unattended by a single friend, the wretched victim of fanaticism breathed his last in an obscure retreat, where his unburied corpse was frightfully mangled by beasts of prey, (22) before it received the rite of interment.

The heart sickens at the long catalogue of human sufferings which the full spirit of tyranny on the one hand, and that of revenge upon the other, called into existence. The hatred of the Irish people to the English ascendancy became so inveterate, that considerations of national safety, or personal danger, failed to operate in quelling a frantic valour which seemed resolved to struggle even with destruction. The principles on which war was carried on in Ireland, produced their natural results. The proceedings of the two contending parties were in conformity with the mistaken policies which regulated the operations of

both; and hence the tremendous evils inseparable from a display of tyranny and avarice on the one side, and of jealousy and revenge on the other, entailed the consequences that flow from despotic violence, and the spirit of resistance which it, always must create.

Alarmed at the dangers that surrounded him, Lord Grey petitioned for his recall. It was granted; as, to use the words of an able historian, "the Queen was assured that he (the Lord Deputy) tyrannised with such barbarity, that little was left in Ireland for her Majesty to reign over, but *ashes and carcasses*."

The removal of Lord Grey from the executive government was followed by an offer of pardon to those Irish who wished to avail themselves of the proposal, excepting only the Earl of Desmond, whose princely territories, being too rich a prize to be resigned by the political pillagers of the age, their proprietor was excluded from the general act of amnesty.

The deaths of Sir John of Desmond and the Doctor Saunders were succeeded by a series of disasters which accelerated and combined to complete the ruin of the Irish cause. Lord Ormond was appointed General of Munster, and all the powers of his energetic mind were exerted to

bring the war to a conclusion. With indefatigable perseverance he pursued and waged incessant hostilities with the Irish clans, who still continued to assemble in the woods and fastnesses of their native land.

While this spirit continued vigorous and unsubdued, the new Lord Justices, Loftus and Wallop,ⁿ (notwithstanding the exclusion of the Desmond from the royal pardon, which, it may be said, obliged him to continue in rebellion) sent an authoritative message, requiring the Earl's unqualified submission to the rulers of the Pale. The answer of the Irish Chief was given in these memorable words :—" *I would rather forsake God than my men !*" (23).

This decided reply gave a signal for the renewal of persecutions, that involved the Earl and his adherents in a succession of horrors, from the recital of which humanity recoils. The Irish gradually sunk under the fatigue, and want, and wretchedness that assailed them. All hope of success had ceased to encourage the prolongation of a fruitless conflict ; and despair at length prompted those who had engaged in it, either to surrender and accept the Queen's pardon, or to wash out their miseries with their blood by seeking death.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ The cannon’s hush’d, nor drum nor clarion sound,
 Helmet and hauberk gleam upon the ground ;
 Horseman and horse lie welt’ring in their gore,
 Patriots are dead, and heroes dare no more.”

MONTGOMERY

“ Listless from each crimson hand
 The sword hangs clogg’d with massacre.”

MOORE.

“ *Ginev.* Ebben, Signore, accordi al mio cordoglio
 La grazia di lasciar libera questa
 Misera destra?

Ariod. Io tutto accordo.

Ginev. Ah, meno
 Non m’attendea da un nobil cor.”

PINDEMONTI.

“ Vieni o dolce mia cura,
 Vieni al paterno sen.”

METASTASIO.

“ This—this is woe !
 Despair and anguish darken round ‘ their ’ view,
 And all but sorrow seems to be untrue.”

R. MONTGOMERY.

WHILE these frightful transactions were in progress through the country, our heroine had re-

mained under the protection of the Lady Baltin-glass, in whose heart her virtues had awakened a strong and lively interest. Therefore, when the moment came in which Geraldine, overpowered with agitation, announced a determination to join her father at Desmond Castle, the Lady Baltin-glass shed tears of sorrow at the prospect of losing a companion, whose superior acquirements and endearing qualities she regarded with the admiration they were calculated to inspire. Many arguments were used to dissuade the daughter of the Desmond from pursuing her design. Finding his reasoning ineffectual, Lord Baltinglass determined to adopt more decided measures, and in plain terms he refused to aid the execution of a project which seemed fraught with danger to his interesting guest.

When this denial was announced, a burst of emotion issued from the overwhelmed heart of Geraldine, and with irresistible energy she painted her filial anxieties, imploring Lord Baltinglass to assuage them, by consenting to arrange a secure mode of travel, which might convey her secretly to Desmond Castle. Geraldine acknowledged that the removal she desired, would be taken not only without her parent's knowledge, but in direct opposition to his express commands. She owned

that her recent intelligence respecting Desmond, had been communicated by an humble clansman, whom she had confidentially employed to convey privately to her ear those informations which a desire to save her from every avoidable anxiety, led her father to conceal.

As our heroine made those confessions, the feelings of her soul were legibly impressed upon her features. She tried to speak with composure, as she told the distracting fears which tore her mind with apprehensions for her parent's fate; but the effort was too much, and a convulsive sob broke short her agonized appeal.

It made its way to the heart of Lord Baltin-glass. He could no longer resist the pleadings of his suppliant; and though he felt considerable repugnance to the undertaking she proposed, he consented to escort her on the following day to Desmond Castle. Having obtained this promise, our heroine felt lightened of a load of care, and the remaining hours of her sojourn with Lady Baltinglass were devoted to the claims of friendship. Long and fervent was the embrace with which these amiable women parted, and many were the prayers that were mutually breathed for their reunion under happier circumstances.

By daybreak Geraldine was on her road to

Desmond Castle. Under the secure conduct which had been procured, our heroine safely reached her place of destination; and as she wound her arms round her father, and bathed his face with her fond tears, the Chieftain fervently blessed his child; while, in sharing her emotion, he forgot to censure the imprudence of the step that had been taken against his will.

Eventful consequences often result from accidental trifles. Through one of those curious and apparently unimportant chances, which frequently stamp the tenor of life with an impression that after-circumstances fail to efface, Thurles learned the loss of the letter he had written to the Lady Geraldine. The acquisition of this intelligence dispelled the doubts which had spread over the Viscount's mind, and the invidious progress of suspicion was stopped. Throwing off the clinging fears and vague conjectures that had overwhelmed him, Thurles no longer rankled under the influence of fancied injuries. He gloried in the renewed certainty of his mistress's affection; and, longing to pour out his feelings at her feet, he resolved to fly to Desmond Castle, and to gain an interview with its inmates, as soon as the service in which he was engaged permitted him to leave his post.

After the return of Lady Geraldine to the seat of her ancestors, three days passed heavily away, without producing any material change in the appearance of political affairs, or in the situation of the persons of our narrative; but on the fourth morning, one of the spies who were employed to watch the movements, and to communicate the designs of the English, rushed into the Desmond's presence, and breathlessly announced that the Parliament of the Pale had issued orders for the speedy march of an immense force, whose object was to pillage Desmond Castle, and to massacre its inmates on the spot.

At this fatal intelligence, an appalling groan burst from the heart of the Chief, for he saw that hope had utterly departed. His fortresses had fallen one by one into the hands of the English; and even when the garrisons surrendered at discretion, their men had been executed with immediate and merciless barbarity. Desmond Castle was the last remaining stronghold of the unfortunate Earl, and he could not command even a handful of soldiers to defend it. He, who had lately wielded the destinies of a nation, now felt that even the shadow of his power was gone. Destitute of friends and wealth, every resource for effectual exertion was beyond his reach; and re-

duced to the last extremity, the Desmond stood overwhelmed by the fearful knowledge, that he was a miserable outlaw, without ability to stop the havoc of death, destruction, and despair. The magnitude of this appalling thought struck on his soul, and for a while his faculties seemed to sink beneath the crowd of horrible ideas which rushed in quick succession through his mind, and stamped their stern character upon his features. He clasped his arms across his breast, which heaved with hard convulsive breathings, that sounded like the last efforts of a breaking heart. A livid scorn sat on his lip, and with eyes that seemed bursting from their sockets, the Earl gazed vacantly around, oppressed by a kind of stupor that impeded words.

From this frightful state the Desmond was aroused by the sudden entrance of his daughter. Her appearance forced him into energy; and in a tempest of distraction, which Geraldine had never seen the Chieftain show before, he told her the tremendous truth he had just learned. For a moment Geraldine gave herself up to the torture which the fatal tidings caused, and gazed in speechless horror, every thought absorbed in this perception,—that a sword was hung above her father's head, which seemed suspended by a single

hair ! But, in the next instant, her heroic fortitude returned ; and though so fearfully agitated, that she looked more like a dead than a living creature, Geraldine resolved to make the preservation of the Desmond her first care, and to act in the way that seemed most likely to attain that object. With a power which amazed even herself, she shook off every weakness ; but that power was not of earth—it had its origin in Heaven, and flowed from the truest source of heroism—a confidence in God. It was this principle which strengthened the feebleness of woman, and in the midst of misery made her firm. Geraldine saw the full extent of all the perils that encompassed her ; but, armed with religious hope, she determined to endeavour to avert them. At the first account of the attack that was meditated against Desmond Castle, she saw the impossibility of defending it against the English ; and, aware how unequal her father would be to contend singly with numbers, she implored him to consult his only chance of safety, by retreating into a place of refuge, which had been strenuously recommended as a temporary shelter, by one of the most attached and devoted of the Desmond sept, Geoffrey Mac Sweeny. The interests of this narrative have not hitherto required the introduction of that faithful clansman to the

reader ; nevertheless, during all the struggles of his suffering lord, Mac Sweeny, whom history commemorates by the ennobling term of *Geffredi Pietas* (24) had adhered to the fluctuating fortunes of the House of Desmond with the most affectionate and disinterested constancy. He was a Captain of the Chieftain's gallow-glasses, and had been the landholder of a considerable property ; but the calamities of the times had swept away his wealth, while they confirmed his fidelity ; and all that remained of his once flourishing possessions was a small ruined house, that, situated in the centre of a wood called Gleann-na-Ginki, lay at the distance of four miles from Tralee.

To this humble retreat, Mac Sweeny, in conjunction with the Lady Geraldine, earnestly besought the Desmond to retire, until the revival of better prospects might bring some chances of success to a cause which, under existing circumstances, it would be madness to defend.

It is needless to describe the mental distractions, thronging thoughts, or discordant feelings, which tore the heart of Desmond, and almost rent its strings asunder, before he yielded to the beseeching prayers of Geraldine and his faithful friend. Drops of indignation started to the Earl's brow, and his cheek flamed and paled almost at the same

instant, when he gave the consent which was unitedly implored.

Though scarcely able to command a soldier to maintain his fortress against the power of an overwhelming army, the Desmond would have gloried in breasting danger, while courting death in the defence of his castle, were it not that such a measure would have bereaved his Geraldine of the protection of a father, and would also have deprived his country of a devoted champion, who still strove to persuade himself, that, if hope gleamed out again, his arm might lead thousands on, from vassalage to freedom. These were the silver links that bound him to existence, and he could not bring himself to snap such ties !

It was settled then, that on the day succeeding that on which the Desmond had consented to retreat into the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki, he and the Lady Geraldine should leave the home of their illustrious ancestors for ever. Unable to witness the soul's pangs which this determination caused, Mac Sweeny, under plea of making some minor arrangements, rushed from the presence of the Chieftain and his daughter, who thus were left to struggle with their misery alone.

CHAPTER XV.

“ And fix’d on empty space, why burn
 Her eyes with momentary wildness ;
 And wherefore do they then return
 To more than woman’s mildness ? ”

O’CONNOR’S CHILD.

“ ’Twas the Benshee’s lonely wailing,
 Well I know the voice of death,
 On the night-wind slowly sailing
 O’er the bleak and gloomy heath.”

*Specimen of a popular Keen, given in Croker’s Fairy
 Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland.*

“ How oft has the Benshee cried !
 How oft has death untied
 Bright links that glory wove,
 Sweet bonds entwin’d by love ! ”

MOORE.

“ What sounds of horror fill the air !
 The maid, possess’d with wild despair,
 Falls on the consecrated ground,
 Where Love’s fond ties were lately wound.”

“ Che parlo ? Ella non m’ode. Avete, o stelle
 Più sventure per me ?
 —Addio, mia vita, addio ! ”

OLIMPIADE.

STRENGTHENED by the assistance of Heaven,
 Geraldine was enabled to go with patient firmness
 through the various duties, the performance of

which the situation of affairs required. Trusting to her God to give success to her exertions, she left nothing undone that could tend to mitigate the Chieftain's sufferings, or which could soften the miseries of his departure from the castle of his forefathers, where he had known so many years of pride and happiness.

Early and exquisite sorrow had made the Lady Geraldine familiarized with grief; yet, as the wretched day drew towards a close, which she felt was the last that she should ever pass within the home of her youth, her soul was bowed to the earth, and in irrepressible anguish she secretly mourned over the wreck of hope and bliss, which now seemed lost for ever. But when she came into her father's presence, the heroic girl braced her mind to conceal the depth of its misery; and directing all her powers to sustain the Desmond, she almost forgot her own sufferings, in endeavouring to comfort his.

The strife of the Chieftain's spirit was inward. During the many hours that followed the conversation to which we have alluded, he scarcely spoke a single word; and when, at length, he inarticulately expressed a desire to take a last farewell of the monastic ruins where his princely ancestors lay in their graves, Geraldine felt something like a

gleam of consolation steal across her soul, at finding that the Earl could rouse from the stupor of despair to breathe that wish.

In agitated solemnity she instantly complied with it ; and the father and daughter, in silent sorrow, bent their steps to a spot which was associated in the breasts of both with imperishable remembrances.

It seemed as if the very atmosphere sympathized with the feelings of the wretched pair ; for, as they proceeded slowly on their desolate way, the evening, which had serenely commenced, became as dreary as if some blighting spirit of the air hovered in the dark clouds that hurried along the sky. A moaning wind arose and sighed through the tall trees, the branches of which, in moving to and fro, made melancholy music. The mountain streams rushed over their stony beds, and the waters of the Atlantic broke against the beach in sullen monotony.

The Desmond and his dear companion felt their spirits sink beneath these saddening influences, to which their inward emotions answered but too keenly. When they reached the ruined monastery, they seated themselves on a green grave, that, silent and lonely, lay close to the margin of the sea, and was overshadowed by the branches of a gigantic oak. Several moments passed before the profound sentiments that lay buried in the hearts

of the Desmond and his child could find an utterance. The gaze of the Earl was long fixed upon the towers of his castle, which were now but indistinctly seen through the haze of gloom. He turned his haggard eye on nearer objects; they spoke a language from the volume of nature, to which a voice within him seemed to answer. He looked on the tombs of his forefathers, who quietly slept in their last home, and the silence of death produced a mysterious awe that hushed the tumults of his soul, and made him feel the nothingness of earthly ambition. The Desmond threw his arm around his child, and his silver locks fell down upon her shoulders, as, pressing her closely to his breast, he whispered, in a stifled tone, "I too shall find a rest within the grave, but *when* and *where*?"

A deep sob burst from Geraldine; yet, though wrought up to agony, she tried to speak of comfort, while in a low and interrupted voice, she said, "A little, a very little longer, and our sorrow shall be turned into peace. Father! think on that world where passion is unknown, where—O God! O God! support him!" prayed the suffering girl, in a fervent transport of feeling that convulsed her whole frame. Unable to articulate another word, she dropped her head upon her father's neck. Her eyes insensibly closed, and a shade passed over her

beautiful countenance, beautiful notwithstanding its paleness and its look of anguish.

At this crisis, Geraldine's name was tremulously uttered by a voice, whose power could almost have arrested the flight of her departing spirit, even if its eternal summons had gone forth.

She opened her eyes; they rested upon Thurles. She bent towards him as he knelt at her feet, and, in wild emotion, fixed his eyes upon her deathlike countenance, while, in a voice choked with agitation, he exclaimed: "And is it thus we meet?—Geraldine!—Desmond!" he added, looking distractedly on both, "within this hour I have learned all the horrors that surround ye! Take pity, oh take pity on yourselves,—on me! Give me a legal right to call *her* mine, and all may yet be well!" cried Thurles, turning suddenly round, and clasping his hands in supplication to the Chief, while the beatings of his heart, which the previous instant might have been heard, entirely stopped, as if the intenseness of anxiety impeded every vital power.

This appeal bore keenly on the Desmond; his haughty spirit was subdued; he felt that Geraldine was standing on the verge of ruin, and it seemed as if Lord Thurles was a messenger of peace, empowered by Heaven to save her from

destruction. The Earl thought on the years of unabated passion which had proved the constancy of the two young beings who were now before him; and yielding to the impulse of his heart, he placed the hand of Geraldine in that of Thurles, and gave an agitated but a full consent to their immediate union.

The next instant our heroine's trembling form was folded in the arms of her lover, who, overwhelmed by emotion, incoherently attempted to pour forth the feelings of his soul.

Life itself seemed leaving Geraldine as she lay speechless on the bosom of Lord Thurles, while an expression of patient, acute, and incommunicable suffering, covered her pallid features.

“My child! my comforter!” exclaimed the Desmond with imploring agitation, as he clasped her cold and nerveless hand within his own, “conquer this excess of feeling; a father's arm shall lead you *there*,” cried the Earl, pointing to the ruined chapel;—“and, when religious rites hallow the love that binds the hearts of both my children,” added the Chief, struggling to force a smile, “my soul shall bless their union.”

Geraldine shivered and gasped for breath. She disengaged herself from the encircling arms of Thurles, and, rigid with emotion, sunk on her

former seat, while in a low faint voice of agony she said—

“ It must not be ! ”

“ Not be ! ” reiterated Thurles, staggering backwards, while a ghastly paleness overspread his face,—“ *Not be !* ” It seemed as if he could articulate no other words than these, which were repeated with the difficulty of a dying effort.

“ Almighty God ! thou knowest how my heart is breaking in this struggle,” faltered Geraldine, wringing her hands and raising her eyes in agony to Heaven ; “ Oh, strengthen me against myself ! ” After a minute’s pause she gasped forth, in a still more sunken voice, “ Thurles, you *cannot* doubt my love ; it is too strong, too—” she stopped again, and absolutely seemed to writhe in anguish. The next wild moment, she started to her feet, and winding her arms round the agitated Desmond, distractedly exclaimed : “ Father ! father ! ask me not to form a tie that would divide us at this hour of despair—it may be *death !* ”

The last word was scarcely audible, yet it was heard by Thurles, who, rushing forward, grasped the arm of Geraldine, as with frantic impetuosity he said : “ Oh God ! retract those words. Here, where our hearts first spoke to each other, be mine.—You will if—if—you love—as I love ! ”

Geraldine's heart swelled into her throat, while, hiding her face in her hands, she sobbed forth in a transport of impassioned feeling:—"I do—I do—spare—pity me!"

Thurles and the Chief recoiled at the sound of her voice, for it spoke the ecstasy of real anguish.

Pierced by a thousand conflicting passions, Thurles again flung himself at the feet of his beloved, and striving to repress the thick sobs which forced their way, he breathlessly exclaimed, "Forgive—forgive—the madness of my heart—I do not doubt your love—I will submit. Grant me but a promise to be mine hereafter—it is all I ask!"

The emotions of Geraldine's soul would not allow her to speak; but the profound tenderness which diffused itself over her entire countenance, when, raising her head, she looked into the eyes of Thurles, expressed her acquiescence, and the fulness of a love which earth has rarely seen equalled.

"May God reward you!" cried the Desmond, gazing with the deepest interest on Thurles: "rise and follow us."

Saying this, the Chief, assisted by the Viscount, supported the dreadfully agitated Geraldine through the passage that led into the half-ruined

chapel of the monastery. When they reached the altar, the lovers involuntarily sunk upon their knees. The all-absorbing feelings which at that solemn moment were shut up in their hearts, may not be told. In silent prayer their souls ascended to the throne of the Eternal, and the heavenly expression that gradually spread over the features of both, as they communed with their God, spoke more eloquently than language could have done, the holy nature of a love, which was dignified and pure as truth itself.

The Desmond, standing on the highest step of the altar, looked for a moment on the youthful pair who kneeled before it. Then, stretching forth his arms to Heaven, he lifted up his soul with their's. After a short pause, he lowered his hands, until they rested on the heads of Geraldine and Thurles, when, in a voice whose tone was awful from its deep solemnity, he said :—"The Lord of Hosts is with us now ! Geraldine, here in the presence of your God and father, swear to wed this man, when death or freedom shall have led me into peace !"

"*I swear !*" burst from the Chieftain's daughter, as she pressed a crucifix against her bosom.

"God and the Virgin bless you both for ever !" cried the Desmond, large tears falling down his

noble countenance, as he joined his daughter's hand to that of Thurles, the revealings of whose soul shone out, while he pressed his beautiful betrothed to his devoted heart. The next moment, drawing a ring from his finger, the Viscount placed it upon Geraldine's, and received one in return, as a pledge and seal of their affecting compact.

The rings had scarcely touched the hands whereon they rested, when a wild unearthly cry resounded through the chapel. As if stricken by an irresistible power, Geraldine fell prostrate and speechless at the foot of the altar. The Desmond's hair moved and bristled on his head. He held his breath. A dark thought seemed to seize his soul. He strained his eyes as if to see some nameless shape, and listened with an agony of awe.

The wailing rose again, and vibrated through the cloisters, in fainter and more mournful modulations. The sides of the Desmond's mouth quivered, an inward chill ran through his body, and—"It is the Benshee's cry! (25) the warning of the death-hour!" feebly ebbed from his livid lips.

The lament, if such it was, swelled to a loud shriek, which thrilled and floated along the air, until it melted into silence.

The scream might have been that of the sea-bird from her rocky nest, or the voice of the wind that whistled through the trees. The foam that broke upon the beach, or the wild notes that sometimes rose from the mariners who plied their way on the wide-spreading waters, might have caused that sound, which, in the space of one brief instant, carried a certainty of death to the hearts of the Desmond and the Lady Geraldine.

It matters not *how* their senses were acted upon, nor *what* it was that wrapt their minds in a strong delusion. However problematical the cause, the effect was definite. It was evidenced in the curdling awe that crept through the spirits of the Chieftain and his child, when they felt the dread conviction, that the supernatural attendant of their house had issued forth a prophetic voice, hailed by national superstition as the herald which for centuries had foreshown the passage of a member of the race of Desmond to the tomb.

A portion of the mysterious awe the scene inspired, had stolen over the mind of Thurles ; for, though in a great degree above the weakness of superstition, he could not entirely escape from the contagion of the influences that surrounded him. An instant, therefore, passed before he spoke or moved. He stood as if a spectre crossed his path ; but the very force of the idea that some dreadful

evil was impending over Geraldine, broke the spell which in the first moment of alarm it had created. Thurles flew to his beloved, and, bending over her, whispered words of love and peace, as he raised her from the ground. The action roused the Desmond from a trance of thought. He threw a troubled glance around him; and when he looked on the pale, terror-stricken features of his daughter, he felt that it was necessary to command himself. Though full of agitating thoughts, the Chief endeavoured to assume composure; while, gently disengaging Geraldine from the arm of Thurles, he replaced it by his own, and, supporting his child, knelt beside her at the foot of the altar. He parted her hair, kissed her forehead, and gazed on her with sorrowful solicitude. By degrees the feelings of the Desmond were sublimed into a more exalted character. His eyes were gradually lighted up with an expression of pious resignation. Religion hallowed his emotions. They lost their bitterness, though they retained their depth; and as the grand realities of eternity rose to his awakened soul, it was evident that his thoughts belonged less and less to the comparatively insignificant concerns of time. Wrapt in the most absorbing meditation, the Chief was silent for some minutes. When he did speak, there was an impressive solemnity in his voice that

sounded almost supernatural to the ear of Thurles, as the words "Leave us,—we must pray!" escaped his lips.

"Is not my God your God? Then why? oh why—" The Viscount stopped. He could not finish; for he understood the deprecating expression, the speaking glance, which told him there *were* holy rites in which he might not mingle with the object that he cherished in his heart of hearts. The thought passed over him like the blight that withers. Thurles was completely overpowered. He took the trembling hand of his affianced bride, ardently pressed it in his own, and gazed on her in agitated silence.

For one short moment she gave full sway to the feelings of her soul. In the next she struggled against the love and sorrow that oppressed her. Endeavouring to collect her scattered senses, Geraldine withdrew her hand from the Viscount, and, raising her eyes, she fixed them upon his, with a supplicating expression, that seemed trying to reiterate the Desmond's request; her tongue could not pronounce it.

That fearful cry, so wild and piercing, rose again! Thurles sprang back several paces. Awe was on the souls of all.

At such a moment, to have spoken of human love, or earthly passions, would have been little

short of sacrilege. Even the strong-minded son of Ormond felt as if the angel of death was hovering near. The sky grew more and more obscure, and the deepening shadows seemed to the Viscount's perturbed fancy like precursors to the darkness of the tomb.

The Desmond waved his hand. The signal was understood and obeyed by Thurles, who, wrought up almost to frenzy, flew to the door of the chapel. There he stopped, and, clinging to the portal arch, turned his strained eyes upon the kneeling figures at the altar.

They were motionless; and seen shrouded in the uncertain gloom of twilight, they assumed a spectral appearance, and looked like phantoms sheeted in the garments of the grave. It seemed to the agitated Thurles as though he gazed on the spirit of her whose love had made existence dear. The thought flashed like a sudden burst of lightning through his brain. There are moments in this world's hours, which, from the intenseness of the feelings they concentrate, might be deemed eternities. It was one of those that now wound up the Viscount's energies to their highest tension.

His heart was ready to break asunder. This state of excitation was too much for man to bear. Thurles uttered a stifled groan, and rushed from the chapel.

CHAPTER XVI.

“ To bear, is to conquer our fate.”

T. CAMPBELL.

“ Now,

Rise up, my heart, in thy own strength, and do
Thy act of justice bravely.”

CORNWALL'S DRAMATIC SCENES

“ What is this world ?—Thy school, oh misery !
Our only lesson is to learn to suffer ;
And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.”

THE REVENGE.

“ But short that contemplation—sad and short
The pause to bid each much-loved scene adieu.”

GERTRUDE OF WYOMING.

“ The Childe departed from his father's hall ;
It was a vast and venerable pile.”

LORD BYRON.

“ Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, silence is in the house
of her fathers.”

OSSIAN.

“ The blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood.”

T. CAMPBELL.

THE first rays of morning had scarcely dispelled
the shades of night, when the Desmond, his daugh-

ter, and Mac Sweeny, met in the great hall of the Castle. They were the only individuals within its walls; for the few remaining vassals of the Chief had been sent on the preceding day to a distant part of the country, where they were led to imagine that the master, whom, with zealous affection they would have followed to the last, intended to rejoin them. To urge the perils to which such resolute allegiance would have exposed these humble but devoted friends, the Earl knew, would be in vain; therefore, to screen them from danger, and to avoid the supplications of his faithful servants, he adopted the pardonable artifice which we have mentioned.

The pallid looks of Geraldine and the ghastly countenance of the Chief, bespoke what both had suffered during the few hours which had elapsed since the scene that has been narrated in the last chapter. The Earl attempted to speak, but the effort was too much, and agitation choked his utterance. Looking around him, he gazed with the vacancy of despair on each well-known object; and as he did so, a groan burst from his heavy heart. The next instant, with a sort of frantic courage, the Chieftain grasped his daughter's hand, and, rushing out of the castle, struck into an obscure path which led towards the nearest defile of the Desmond mountains.

The silence that succeeded this sudden movement remained unbroken; while the Earl, supporting his trembling daughter, followed Mac Sweeny, who had instinctively assumed the guidance of their steps. Having hurried along the Atlantic coast for the distance of a quarter of a mile, the party ascended the cliffs, through a forest track that led to a chain of grey rocks, which formed the last screen between them and the view of Desmond Castle. Hitherto it had seemed as though the wretched wanderers feared to turn even one last look on the loved home from whence they were driven forth to roam in misery on the face of the earth. They had pursued their desolate way in the dark and brooding silence of despair, their eyes fixed steadfastly upon the scene that spread before, their hearts resting with the dearer one that lay behind them. But on reaching the angle of the beetling height the turn of which was to exclude a scene so consecrated to the memories of departed happiness, the Desmond stopped short, and abruptly wheeled his daughter round.

Every fibre of the Earl's giant frame quivered, and his distended eyes seemed bursting from their sockets as he fixed them on his once blessed home; and stretching both his arms towards it, convulsively articulated—"Look!"

The impetuosity of the action made Mac Sweeny turn :—" On fire !" wildly exclaimed the astonished clansman, when on changing his position his awe-struck gaze rested on spiral columns of vivid flame, which, through masses of smoke, shot up to heaven from the blazing pile of Desmond Castle.

" And fired by me !" shouted the Chief, (26) in a voice that thundered forth the feelings which were raging in his breast.

" You !—*you* fired the Castle ?" cried Mac Sweeny in amaze.

" This hand has done it—see !"—exclaimed the Earl, bursting into a horrible laugh, as one vast body of flame rushed from the fiery vortex which devoured his fortress, and scattered red fragments of its walls on every side.—" See !—the blaze shoots higher and higher up the sky—God ! what a pile I have lit for Ireland's sacrifice !"

The scarlet of the Desmond's cheek suddenly turned to whiteness ; his whole aspect changed and his frantic transport ceased, for his eyes had fallen on the dreadful calm that settled on his daughter's face. She shed not a tear—she breathed not a word—but with clasped hands she knelt upon the ground, her eyes fastened on the wreaths of smoke and pointed flames that burst forth from the burning Castle, and seemed to swallow up

its black walls, which tumbled at this instant with a tremendous crash, that was heard even at the distance where the gazers stood. Geraldine's look, speaking the full completion of unutterable woe, struck on her parent's heart, with a power which quelled the stormy violence of its emotions.

"My child is left me still!" broke from the convulsed lip of the Chief, as he upraised his daughter and wildly snatched her to his breast, while with an awful sense of his late outrageous violence, he faintly added—"God! forgive!"

The next instant, with collected firmness, the Earl silently laid his hand on the arm of Mac Sweeny, who, understanding the gesture, assisted to lead the Lady Geraldine round the angle of the rocky barrier, which shut out from view the radiations of flame that ascended from the blazing ruins, in spires of brilliant light.

As soon as the dreadful agitations which the recent scenes produced had in some degree subsided, the unfortunate wanderers struck into the depths of the forests of Desmond. After suffering many alarms, and escaping various dangers incidental to the direction of a track that was beset with their enemies, the Earl and his companions reached the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki, where their harassed frames found comparative rest in the

ancient house (27) that was the only asylum which the faithful Mac Sweeny had it in his power to offer.

Before the once great Earl of Desmond reached his wretched place of refuge, the Castle of his forefathers was in a shapeless mass of ruins. The desire of the Chief to destroy that noble pile rather than to abandon it to the rapine of the English, was fulfilled. He had laid the surest plan to disappoint his enemies, and, as we have seen, his manœuvre was attended with complete success.

The fortress of Desmond was burned to the ground, and an edifice which had been the scene of rude magnificence for centuries, was no more !

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Say, mounts he the ocean-wave, banish’d, forlorn,
Like a limb from his country cast bleeding and torn ?
Ah no ! for a darker departure is near.”

LOCHIEL’S WARNING.

“ He falls by the sordid hands of butchering villains ;
Now, now he bleeds, he dies !
See, his rich blood in purple torrents flows,
And nature sallies in unbidden groans.” SMITH.

“ Remember the glories of Brien the brave,
Though the days of the hero are o’er ;
Though lost to Momonia, and cold in the grave,
He returns to Kinkora no more !
That star of the field, which so often has pour’d
Its beam on the battle, is set !”

IRISH MELODIES.

“ Oh ! ’tis not, Hinda, in the power
Of fancy’s most terrific touch
To paint thy pangs in that dread hour—
Thy silent agony—’twas such
As those who feel can paint too well,
But none e’er felt and lived to tell !”

MOORE.

To detail the sufferings and persecutions which the Earl of Desmond and his daughter underwent, subsequent to their flight into the wood of Glenn-

na-Ginki, would fill a volume. The unfortunate Chief, outlawed by proclamation, and surrounded by numerous enemies, who, attracted by the high price that was set upon his head, incessantly pursued him, was obliged to fly from Mac Sweeny's house, the day after he took refuge there. From that period, the Chief and his devoted child roved from one miserable haunt to another, seeking shelter in the caves of the rock, or in the wildernesses of the woods, that clothed the land of which the Desmond had once been the powerful and honoured Lord.

Undergoing every privation that the fancy can conceive, subsisting on the fruits of the desert and the waters of the stream, the wretched Earl and the heroic partner of his fate pursued their wandering existence, no longer solaced by the presence of their faithful friend, the dauntless Mac Sweeny : he who, in defiance of every peril, had fearlessly shared the hardships, and endeavoured to mitigate the sufferings of his Chieftain, was no more ! His noble heart had shed its life's-blood in the defence of Desmond, and his last sigh was breathed for the preservation of the man he gladly died to save.

The records of history attest the reality of the trials that were the Earl's lot, at the period (1583)

to which our narrative refers. Did not such evidence substantiate the actual existence of the miseries to which the Chieftain was exposed, they would almost surpass belief, and might be deemed the incredible creations of an overcharged imagination. But "the witness of times past" gives the stamp of truth to those incidents and transactions, which, at first view, might seem to belong to the page of romance, rather than to that of history.

Among numerous instances of the toils and hazards which befell the suffering outlaws of our tale, we find it recorded, that on one occasion, when the Desmond was pursued into a mountain fastness by a body of soldiers, he and the fair consoler of his destiny were obliged to stand up to their necks in a river (28) that washed a bank, beneath the shade of which they escaped discovery ; but the Earl's attendants were slain, and his goods became the booty of his foes.

The general state of Ireland was scarcely less deplorable than that to which the leader of the late desperate tumults was reduced. The wretched condition of the country is thus described by the celebrated author of "The Fairy Queen," who can never be accused of undue partiality to Ireland, and who, during his secretaryship to Lord

Grey, was an eye-witness of the following terrific scene.

“Notwithstanding,” says Spenser, “that the province of Munster was a most plentiful country, full of corn and cattle, yet ere one year and a half, they were brought to such wretchedness as that any heart would rue the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them ; they looked like anatomies of death ; they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves ; they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them ; yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves ; and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet not able to continue there withal ; so that in a short space there was none almost left, and a most populous and plentiful country was suddenly left void of man and beast.”

Amid all this national and personal distraction, the unfortunate Earl of Desmond had hitherto foiled the attempts of his pursuers to effect his capture. After having passed, with the almost exhausted Geraldine, from one frightful situation to another, the Chief had been compelled by circumstances to determine to secrete himself once

more within his former place of refuge, Mac Sweeny's ruined house, in the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki.

The site of this wild retreat was singularly romantic. The old building was embosomed in the centre of a grove, which clothed the bank of a deep and picturesque glen. Elevated and irregular steeps rose perpendicularly on either side of a mountain river, that, tumbling over rough masses of stone, fell in a succession of small cascades, while brawling its waters through the valley which they fertilized. There was great variety in the course of this beautiful current. At one time it flowed like a sheet of liquid light, glittering through the foliage of ancient trees, that stretched their gigantic arms over a body of water that was pure and smooth as crystal; at another, unshadowed by a single branch, the river leaped through the fissures of projecting rocks, which often threw up their naked crags as if to foam it into strife.

The morning clouds were floating in the East, when the Desmond and his daughter returned to the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki, after an absence of some weeks, during which time they had endured almost every species of human suffering. The mists exhaled from the hills and the waters by the beams of the rising sun, ascended in fanciful

shapes, that were gradually dispersing over the mountain's side. Many and various were the beauties of the landscape. But the romantic features of a scene which could scarcely be surpassed in nature, were unheeded by the weary wanderers. The song of the birds, the brightness of the dawn, the fragrance of the air, failed to invigorate their worn spirits, or to arrest, for a single moment, the wretchedness that preyed upon their hearts.

When the Earl reached his former lurking-place, he was joined by a few of his devoted kerne, who, in the extremity of his distress, gave an affecting proof of the sincerity of an attachment which determined them to share their Chieftain's fate. The exertions made by these faithful creatures to alleviate the sufferings of their unfortunate Lord, were quite extraordinary. When in search of the food which was necessary for the subsistence of the Desmond and his daughter, the humble companions of their destiny braved the utmost danger, by venturing into those districts that were filled and beset with inveterate foes. The horrors of want were greater than those of war; and, as time crept on, the unhappy Chief of Desmond found himself reduced to the most cruel extremities. Famine stared him in the face, and

sickness as well as need assailed him. The horrid scenes which the Earl had witnessed—the agony of his mind—the fatigues of his body—and a deprivation of the common necessities of life, combined to produce a dangerous fever. For many wretched days and sleepless nights, Geraldine, with indefatigable care and tender anguish, watched by her father's side, endeavouring to mitigate his sufferings and to preserve his life. The fever of the Chief at length subsided; but it left him in so weak a state, that he could scarcely move.

Years instead of weeks seemed to have passed over the Earl since his flight from Desmond Castle. A fearful change had taken place in his appearance, though much of the natural nobility of his person still showed forth through the ruin which sickness and sorrow had made. Lines, that looked like those of extreme age, marked every feature of the Desmond; his eyes were haggard, his brow was furrowed, and the muscles round his mouth were shrunk and withered. As Geraldine gazed on these visible symptoms of decay, her heart sunk within her, and the acuteness of misery seized upon her soul, while she witnessed the patient resignation with which the exhausted invalid submitted to his fate. But every hour his

debility increased, and he seemed sinking into the grave for want of the animal food which, in his present condition, was necessary to recruit the wasted powers of life. The moment this conviction pressed on the minds of the Desmond's followers, they determined, at all risks, to procure the sustenance their Chief required. In pursuance of this design, the kerne left the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki, and proceeded by stealth towards Castlemain, where they hoped to seize some beasts of pasture, for the support of their suffering Lord. This expectation was fulfilled. The kerne met and secured a small stock of cattle, (29) after which they joyfully prepared to return with their prey to the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki. But scarcely had the party commenced their perilous route, when the owner of the cows (a woman named Moriarty) discovered her loss. She repaired to her brother, informed him of the seizure of her little stock, and besought him to attempt its recovery. Owen Moriarty, resolving to obtain revenge for the damage which had been inflicted on his sister, stated her grievances to the English Governor of Castlemain, and with such address, that the petitioner obtained a body of British soldiers, with whom he followed the track which the feet of the cattle had left upon the soil. That fa-

tal path led to the wood of Gleann-na-Ginki. On arriving there the soldiers halted, with the intention of resting for the night; but suddenly a ray of flickering brightness that played through the forest, caught the attention of Daniel Kelly, the leader of the military force. He instantly commanded one of his party to advance warily, and to reconnoitre the place from which the light appeared to issue. The man who received this order obeyed it, and soon returned with the intelligence of having discovered a ruined house, in which six persons, apparently belonging to the rebel party, were concealed.

“We must attack them—soldiers, on!” whispered Kelly, with all the eagerness of anticipated triumph; and, as he spoke, he pressed forward with his troop. An exulting shout was uttered by the English, when having burst through the brushwood that obstructed their path, they reached the lonely cottage. Four of the persons who had been concealed within its walls, fled through a back entrance, panic-struck at the approach of a military detachment. To force the door of the half-ruined house was the action of a moment. One frantic shriek then issued from the building, and sent a thrill of horror even through the rude breasts of the soldiers. Appalled by the sound that still echoed terribly in their ears, they

involuntarily stopped at the threshold, and stood motionless, staring on the sight that was presented to their view.

An old man, of noble aspect, lay extended on the ground before a fire, his body almost totally concealed by a female figure, that, still and moveless, was stretched over it. The devoted girl, though her eyes were closed, and her features apparently fixed in the darkness of death, looked beautiful. Her arms, as if in the last mortal gripe, were firmly clasped round the neck of the old man, her bent head rested lifelessly on his breast, and her dishevelled hair shrouded his countenance.

A blaze of strong fire-light fell, in bold relief, on both these figures, as they lay upon the rocky floor; but the man's face was veiled by the dark locks which, from the position of the female's head, fell across his features.

The sudden sight of these two prostrate forms, which we need scarcely say were those of Desmond and his child, presented a picture of such striking power, that the momentary suspension from revenge which has been mentioned, was the consequence of beholding it.

The Earl's national garb, torn and soiled as it was, declared the wearer's rank. Kelly perceived this circumstance, and recovered his self-possession at the same instant of time.

“ To vengeance and to victory !” burst from his lip. Shouting this fearful cry, he raised his sword, darted forward, and, followed by his soldiers, rushed upon the Desmond.

The Earl’s eyes blazed like comets, his spirit shone out through his shattered frame, and fire itself seemed to burn in every vein. He freed his neck from Geraldine’s arms, half upraised himself, and, forgetting his physical weakness, tried to snatch a weapon of defence ; but before he could heave off the senseless body that, with a death-like load, weighed down his own, Kelly plunged his sword into the arm of the Chief, and with such force, as nearly to gash it from the shoulder. Drawing out the weapon from the gaping cut it had inflicted, he whirled the reeking blade above the old man’s head, and as the blood that drenched it trickled down on the white hairs of his victim, Kelly, in brutal triumph, bade him “ prepare to die !”

“ Spare *her* ! I am Earl of Desmond,” (30) broke in dying accents from the Chief, as his wounded arm dropped on the motionless figure of his child, and covered her with his blood.

This appeal had no effect on the ruffian to whom it was addressed. He uttered a fierce oath of revenge, and, aiming another desperate stroke at the

defenceless Desmond, instantly severed the head from the body. (31) Kelly spurned the Earl's quivering trunk with his foot, then, turning to one of his men, he pointed to the inanimate Geraldine, and savagely exclaimed, "Try if she lives!"

The soldier knelt down, and chafed our heroine's hands. They were cold as marble; but though her whole figure lay as still as if within the grasp of the grave, the faint fluttering of her breath, and a convulsive tremor of the nether lip, betrayed existence.

"She is not dead!" said the soldier, dropping the hand whose pulse feebly beat beneath his pressure, and fixing his eyes on his leader, he silently awaited further orders.

"Then part her from the rebel's corse, and try to revive her. She will be a fair prize for our commander; but, by Heaven, I will ask a high reward for her, and *this!*" cried Kelly, fixing the Desmond's ghastly head on the point of a long pike, and raising it above the group of men, whose eyes glared like those of demons, as they sternly gazed on the frightful token of their leader's triumph.

At the suggestion of the soldier, who was still trying to revive our heroine, by sprinkling water on her face and hands, Kelly consented to retire

outside the house. Almost at the moment when he left it, the livid lips of Geraldine slightly quivered, and, with a faint groan, she opened her eyes; but the lids instantly closed again, and her features became fixed and rigid as before. It was impossible to ascertain whether she was conscious of the horrors of the surrounding scene, though it was evident her wayworn spirit had not fled. On being made acquainted with this circumstance, Kelly determined to bear the daughter of Desmond to the quarters of his commanding officer, which lay at no great distance. The medical aid that seemed necessary for the maiden's recovery could be obtained there, and as every moment seemed an age to Kelly, until he claimed the reward to which he was entitled, he instantly ordered his men to place our corpse-like heroine on a litter, that was found in a corner of the wretched room which she had so lately occupied.

When this was done, the brutal Kelly, bearing aloft the pike to which the trophy of his bloody deed was fixed, headed the soldiers, who raised the litter where Geraldine was laid, and followed their leader, as he took the nearest route to the station of his commanding officer.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ Ma ecco omai l’ora fatale è giunta
Che ’l viver dì Clorinda al suo fin deve.”

* * * *

“ In queste voci languide, risuona
Un non sò chè di flebile e soave
Ch’ al cor gli serpe.

* * * In questa forma
Passa la bella donna e par che dorma.”

TASSO.

“ She’s lost for ever !
It was a dreadful moment ; not the tears,
The lingering, lasting misery of years
Could match that minute’s anguish ;—all the worst
Of sorrow’s elements in that dark burst
Broke o’er his soul, and, with one crash of fate,
Laid the whole hopes of his life desolate !”

MOORE.

“ Hush’d were his Gertrude’s lips ! but still their bland
And beautiful expression seem’d to melt
With love that could not die !”

T. CAMPBELL.

“ Thou hast left us in darkness, first of the maids of Lutha !
Soon hast thou set, Malvina, daughter of generous Toscar.
* * * When wilt thou rise in thy beauty, first of Erin’s
maids ? Thy sleep is long in the tomb, and thy morning distant far.
Pleasant be thy rest, O lovely beam !”

OSSIAN.

THE course of a few hours brought Kelly’s party
to the place of destination. During their progress

thither, efforts were assiduously made, from time to time, to revive the almost motionless Geraldine. She showed symptoms of life and consciousness, as far as a feeble pulse and shortened respiration could give evidence of either; but her eyes had not unclosed even for a single instant, neither had a syllable escaped her lips.

The night was far advanced, and sleep and darkness reigned throughout the English camp, when Geraldine's escort exchanged the countersign with the guard on duty. Favoured by the deep gloom of the sky, the party then passed on, without exciting any particular observation. This was what Kelly wished, for he wanted to be the first informer of the Desmond's death. In order to attain that object, he concealed his spear and its frightful appendage, while silently proceeding through the British camp. For the same purpose he caused his soldiers to close round the litter which they bore, so as effectually to screen the Lady Geraldine from notice.

When her conductors suddenly stopped before the tent of their commanding officer, our heroine still lay in the inanimate state we have described, hardly conscious where she was, or whether the horrors that floated through her brain were real or imaginary.

The tent stood in an isolated situation. There was a dead silence within it, but light shone through the canvass. Kelly advanced, and cautiously parting the draperies of the pavilion, so as to enable his eye to scan the interior, he discovered that the object of his visit had not yet retired to rest, but was seated at a table, apparently engaged in writing military despatches.

The confusion of Kelly's mind permitted neither arrangement of thought nor recollection of ceremony. Whispering to his men to stand outside the entrance, he precipitated himself into the middle of the tent, and elevating the distorted face of Desmond, now black with coagulated blood, Kelly, in unutterable triumph, planted the pike that bore it, directly before his officer, who, dropping the pen from his hand, started back and stared in horror at the gory spectacle; his eyes nearly as fixed as those which, open and glassy in the dreadful calm of death, seemed to return his gaze.

For one moment all was still. In the next the officer's breathing grew to a convulsive gasp, while straining his sight, which still was fastened on the bodiless head of Desmond, he whispered, in a hollow interrupted voice:—"It is no vision!—he is dead!—where then, oh God! is—" the tremor of mental agony suspended speech.

All these things happened, it might be said, at the same instant of time. As momentary was the action of Kelly, who, with the swiftness of an arrow from the bow, sprung backwards, dashed apart the canvass curtains of the tent, and uttering no other word than—"Enter!" gave the corpse-like body of Geraldine to the sight of—Thurles!

A fearful cry broke from the distracted lover as he staggered forwards, and fell on his knees beside the litter, which the soldiers, in obedience to their leader, bore into the tent. In the paroxysm of his torture, Thurles was unable to speak, or stir from the posture in which he had fallen. With clasped hands he gazed, in the stunning stupefaction of despair, on the death-like form of his mistress, and shuddered as he looked on the blood which saturated her long hair, and lay congealed upon her neck and arms, in frightful contrast with their marble whiteness. Geraldine moved.

"Merciful God—she lives!" shrieked Lord Thurles, starting to his feet, while trembling between hope and agony, he raised the clay-cold body of his love, and clasped it to his heart.

"She *is* alive! That is the Desmond's blood, and my reward——"

"Out of my sight!" cried the half-frantic Thurles, interrupting Kelly with the fierceness of a maniac.

The man paused, and seemed inclined to withstand the order of his officer.

In that critical instant, Geraldine unclosed her eyes. Her look was turned upwards; it fixed on the dead face of Desmond!—Life ebbed in that view. A film overspread her sight; her lids reclosed, and every muscle of her body quivered, while the dark shadow of death settled on her features.

“Monster!—blood-hounds, away! or—”

Kelly and his soldiers waited not for the conclusion of the Viscount's sentence. Terrified at the violence of his words and gestures, the men, with one consent, fell back between the curtains of the tent, and disappeared.

Though labouring with a tremendous agitation, that seemed to threaten the extinction of his being, Thurles retained his senses. He laid the daughter of Desmond on the litter, and snatching a vase that stood within the tent, bathed her lips and forehead with the water it contained. He rubbed her icy hands, and in the frenzy of his spirit, called aloud upon her name.

The frantic tones of her distracted lover seemed to awake the soul of Geraldine. Her eyes again opened:—they were dark and dim; but after having cast one hurried glance around the tent, as if in search of what they dreaded most to see, they

dwelt in anguished but undying fondness on the face of Thurles. His heart's throbs might be heard, as in bitter hopelessness he bent over his beloved, and, in the excess of speechless terror, pressed both his hands against his brow, as if to keep his brain from bursting.

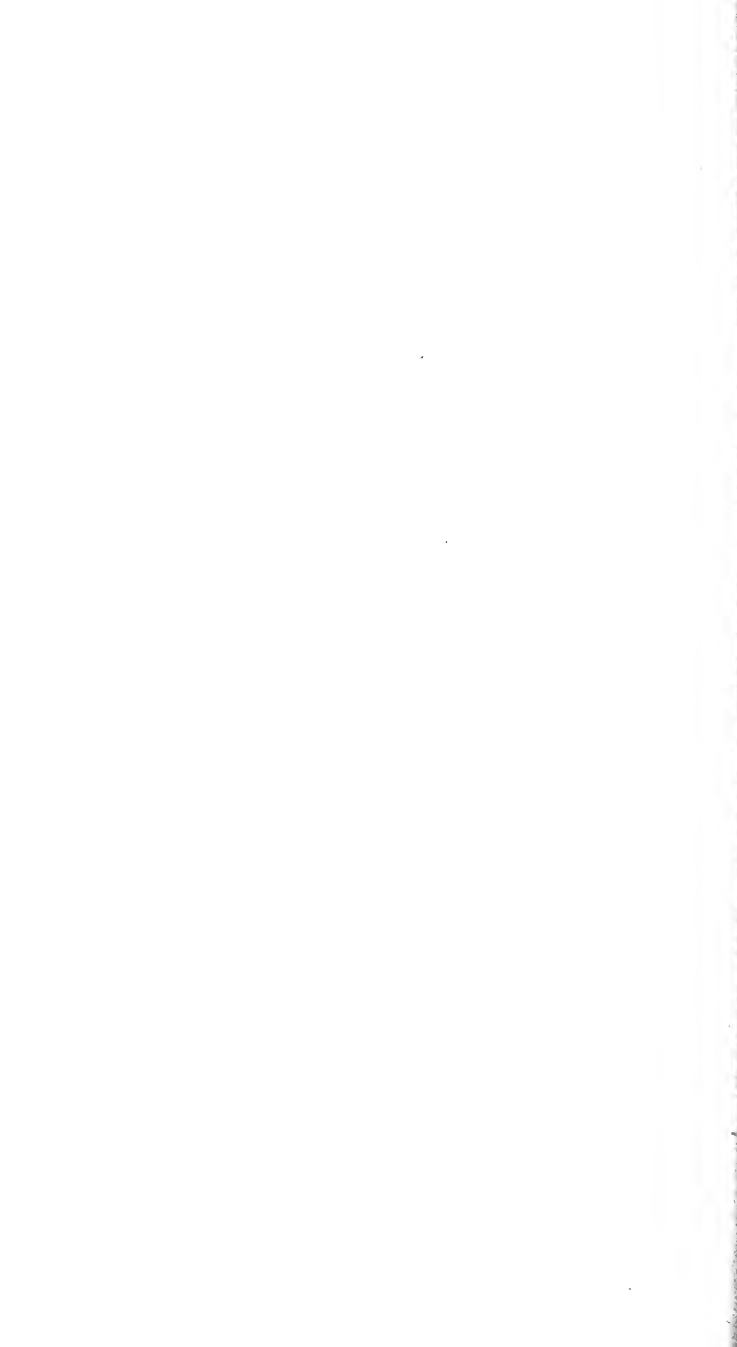
The action showed to Geraldine the ring, which she had given when betrothed. Her eyes instantaneously became intensely radiant, and her cheeks flushed with unnatural brightness, as she looked upon that memorable pledge. Despair faded away for a moment, and young and passionate love spread its strong expression over her re-animated features. She struggled to summon all her fleeting strength, and tried to raise herself; but the effort was in vain, and, weak and dizzy, she sunk within the folding arms of Thurles. As she did so, a livid whiteness circled round her mouth, and a cold dew broke out from every pore.

The daughter of Desmond fixed a lingering look upon the ring; then fondly riveted her eyes on Thurles; and while her soul was bursting from its earthly prison, she faintly whispered with her dying breath:—"I am—I shall be *your's*—" She stopped,—glanced at the garments that were covered with her father's blood, gave one convulsive shiver, dropped her head upon the breast of

Thurles, and gently murmuring—" *in Heaven!*"—
ceased to suffer.

*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*

Over the distraction of the bereaved survivor, we draw the veil of silent pity. We must not strive to paint *his* feelings, for description at the present moment would profane them. Let the imagination of the reader shadow forth each human woe, which in wrenching the fibres of the heart, opens its innermost recesses to despair; and the awful sketch will fail to represent one hour of Thurles's agonies.



POSTSCRIPTUM.

ON the principle which enjoins that a tragedy should end with the catastrophe, it may be said, that this work, to preserve a critical consistency, ought to terminate with the last chapter. Those who think so, may, as the main interest of the narrative is gone, close the present volume without further perusal: readers, who are not such nice observers of the unity of action, will probably deem the following particulars neither irrelevant nor uninteresting.

The death of the Earl of Desmond gave a finishing stroke to the cause he had espoused; (32) but the result of the system that had been acted upon

in Ireland, passed not rapidly away. Insurrection, it is true, was quelled, but the licence of a conquering soldiery continued to inflict the most barbarous cruelties on the vanquished.

For some time after the termination of the Desmond rebellion, the unfortunate Irish were the prey of sanguinary savages, whom we can scarcely recognise as members of the human race. A horrible feature is added to the tragical history of Ireland, in the ferocious spirit which dictated the following enormities: they are related by Doctor Curry in these words:—

“After Desmond’s death, and the entire suppression of his rebellion, unheard-of cruelties were committed on the provincials of Munster, (his supposed former adherents,) by the English commanders. Great companies of these provincials, men, women, and children, were often forced into castles, and other houses, which were then set on fire; and if any of them attempted to escape from the flames, they were shot or stabbed by the soldiers who guarded them. It was a diversion to these

monsters of men, to take up infants on the points of their spears, and whirl them about in their agony; apologizing for their cruelty by saying, that “if they suffered them to live to grow up, they would become *Popish rebels*.” Many of the women were found hanging on trees, with their children at their breasts, strangled with their mother’s hair.”

Such facts speak for themselves, and require no comment; we shall therefore turn from their appalling details, to those historical transactions that are immediately connected with our narrative, and which consequently ought to find a place in its concluding pages.

The last gloomy vengeance which Elizabeth took on the unfortunate Earl of Desmond, was that of causing his head to be impaled on London bridge, where the hideous spectacle was exhibited as the trophy of her triumph, and the memento of his fate.

The life of the great Chief of Desmond was terminated on the eleventh of November 1583. His body was concealed by his clansmen for the

space of eight weeks, after which lapse of time, it was buried in the small chapel of Killanamana, (33) near Castle Island, in the county of Kerry. There, in a lonely grave, repose the ashes of a man who has been portrayed in the notices of history under two very different aspects. Some writers, in styling him "*ingens rebellibus exemplar*," have represented the Earl of Desmond as an unprincipled traitor to his Sovereign: others depict him as a hero, who, in resisting tyrannical injustice, evinced himself the champion of his country's freedom.

The consistency of truth may have been partially violated in each of these portraits; for both the censurers and the advocates of the Lord of Desmond may have fallen into the error of misrepresentation, while labouring to deduce from warped and distorted facts, those particular conclusions which suited the cherished theories of the respective writers.

The tomb in which the Chieftain was interred, received his daughter. In death, Geraldine was

laid beside that father, to whom she had adhered through life, with all the fond fidelity of filial love. Their bodies rest together in one grave, where the unconscious dust will sleep,

“Till earth herself shall be no more.”

But the gates of eternity have opened to admit the spirits of the Desmond and his child, whose souls, almost at the same instant of time, passed into that sphere, where passion is unknown, and in which the transient dreams and vain distinctions of this mortal world are forgotten.

When Geraldine, she who had lately glowed in all the radiancy of loveliness, was laid within the darksome chambers of the grave, this life was disenchanted to Lord Thurles's view. In the spring of youth his earthly happiness had perished. The most precious link in the chain of being was rudely broken, and his crushed heart bereaved of its dearest stay in a scene of sorrow, almost sunk beneath the burden of existence. But the soul that finds no joy on earth, takes rest in Heaven. Immortality speaks comfort to the mourner ; for,

in thinking on the bliss of a reunion with departed spirits, he feels that in the realm where separations never come, his purified affections,

“Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom !”

Yet slow and gradual is the progress of the mind, in learning the difficult task of resignation to a doom which misery has sealed. The heart sickens at the prospect of a dreary prolongation of wretchedness, and, in the first storm of grief, recoils from the fate which makes it agony to live. Bitter are the secret sorrows, the lingering miseries, the strong emotions which the sufferer endures, ere he can school his feelings into uncomplaining patience to the will of God. Lord Thurles's inward struggles evidenced this truth. It was long, very long, before the load of anguish, which, with a sudden and tremendous stroke, had fallen on his spirit, was even partially removed. The heart may “brokenly live on ;” but when all that is near and dear to it is taken away at once ; when, from the depth of human passion, the tide

of grief rushes over the faded green of life, then the soul is overwhelmed by a flood of woe, which death alone can stay.

Months of torture elapsed before Lord Thurles found relief; the revolutions of years could never cause anguish such as *his* to pass away; but religion soothed and calmed it into resignation. The balm of heavenly comfort was gradually poured into his soul, and its blessed effects were manifested in a submission to the decrees of Eternal Wisdom, which evidenced the hopes of the Christian, and sublimed the sufferings of the man. It is true, that notwithstanding this, the bereaved lover keenly mourned the desolation which had wrecked his earthly joys for ever; but that natural feeling could not overpower Lord Thurles's sense of the duties he was called on to perform. Though his own felicity was gone, he thought it was his part to live for that of others; therefore, as soon as sufficient fortitude could be summoned for the attempt, the Viscount tried to create an interest for his mind, by actively engaging it in an endeavour

to promote those measures which promised to ameliorate the political state of Ireland, and to advance the welfare of an important portion of mankind.

The enlightened views and liberal principles of Lord Thurles qualified him for working through the mighty plan which he chalked out, to remedy existing evils. The country respected him as the supporter of an equitable policy, which was calculated to close the ruinous divisions that distracted an entire kingdom. Ardently desiring the pacification of those differences in political and religious points, which had inflicted a mass of miseries on the Irish people, Lord Thurles, with bold and faithful zeal, laboured to remove the operating causes, to which such lamentable consequences might be traced. He raised his voice in the English Parliament against the predominant defects of its administration towards Ireland, and nobly attempted to effect the reformation of those radical abuses which had degraded the character and retarded the improvement of the people over whom they had been practised. He also un-

dertook the more arduous task of endeavouring to convince the Irish of the guilt and folly of many of the measures an imperfect policy had prompted them to take—measures which, in assuming the specious name of patriotism, had opened a thousand avenues to public ruin. In doing this, Lord Thurles sedulously laboured to lead the dejected Irish into submission to “the just government and protection which,” to use the words of Sir John Davies, “were *promised* unto them for the time to come.” (34)

In the person of Sir John Perrot, (35) the new Lord Deputy of Ireland, our hero found an able, humane, and impartial coadjutor, who joined him, heart and hand, in attempting to organize those salutary regulations, which were calculated to extinguish the fires of discord, and to restore tranquillity to a distracted land. The following great public measure was well adapted to procure those desirable objects. It consisted in the announcement of a general amnesty, and offer of pardon to all who were disposed to place themselves under

the protection of the English crown. This act was followed by the appointment of Sheriffs to each county, who were ordered to administer the laws with strict impartiality to the natives of the soil. Many other equitable regulations distinguished the government of Sir John Perrot; and it is worthy of remark, that what oppression failed to extort, the establishment of public justice immediately procured. The Chiefs and people of Ireland, grateful for the novel benefit of a humane and equitable administration, crowded round the Lord Deputy, with every demonstration of fidelity and zeal. Oaths of allegiance to the Crown of England were taken by the heads of the Hibernian clans; and, to testify the sincerity of those professions, the Irish consented to maintain, at their own expense, eleven hundred troops for Elizabeth's service; annexing only this proviso:—that they were to be allowed the free and unrestricted exercise of their national religion.

Several important advantages were secured to Ireland by the wise and liberal government of Sir

John Perrot; but merit like his could scarcely fail to excite the envy and the hatred of inferior minds. His noble conduct was misrepresented to the Queen of England; and the country whose wounds he had laboured to heal, was deprived of her zealous friend and kindest governor (36).

The scenes which followed the close of Perrot's administration were sufficiently disheartening to the lovers of civil and religious freedom. But Lord Thurles was aware that the full spirit of the state reform which the late Viceroy had endeavoured to effect, could never be suddenly produced. He knew that the introduction of regenerating changes always must be gradual, because their progress can only be regulated by the advancement of national improvement and the enlargement of the views of political society. Consoled by the hope that as the spirit of the age liberalized, the protection of justice would be extended to Ireland, Thurles continued his exertions in her behalf; sometimes meeting with success, but more frequently encountering disappointment.

For some years the destroyer of the Earl of Desmond enjoyed the annual pension of twenty pounds, with which the Queen of England rewarded him for the bloody deed that had terminated the Chieftain's life. But retributive justice eventually overtook the miscreant who performed that act. Kelly was hanged at Tyburn (37) for various crimes, which loaded his name with infamy, and sent him to a dishonoured grave, covered with the opprobrium of mankind.

On the attainder of the great Earl of Desmond, (38) his vast estates, amounting to five hundred and seventy-four thousand six hundred and twenty-eight acres of English measure, were declared forfeited to the Queen, who, anxious to accomplish her inhuman scheme of exterminating the Irish, in order to repeople Munster with a British colony, dismembered and disposed of the Desmond palatinate to English undertakers, at the inviting rate of three, and in some instances of twopence, per acre.

The chief stipulation with which the receivers of

these remarkable grants were shackled was this:— that *none of the native Irish* were to be admitted among their tenantry, and that a certain number of English families were to be established in each seigniory, according to its relative extent.

Sir Walter Raleigh and others of the Queen's favourites obtained immense estates (39) out of the forfeited land, from which the ancient possessors, (usually denominated "*the Irish enemy*,") were thus ejected.

We need not dwell on the weakness of the iniquitous policy at which we have glanced, nor is it requisite to enlarge on the results its practical operation could not fail to produce. The evils of such a system must be so obvious to every thinking mind, that animadversion would be superfluous.

The Ulster (40) war, and the commotions which continued to distract the Irish to the end of Elizabeth's reign, are matters of history which are too well known, to require any lengthened notice in these pages. Suffice it then to say, that during

the course of those unfortunate dissensions, Lord Thurles, firm in his allegiance to his Queen, was eminently distinguished for personal devotion to her service, though his enlightened mind scrupled not to avow its condemnation of many of the political measures that disgraced the English administration in Ireland. Whenever an opportunity occurred, which promised to present a chance for the correction of those defects, the son of Ormond, with a bold and faithful hand, pointed them out to the ministers of his sovereign. So far from falling in the opinion of his country by this gallant independence of conduct, Lord Thurles was raised, by its magnanimous fairness, to the highest point of public estimation; for even the illusions of national prejudice did not presume to cast a shade upon that loyalty which, to the Viscount's latest hour, was unimpeachable and unimpeached.

Lord Ormond viewed his son with parental pride as he thus held on his political career, with the noble self-confidence of fearless virtue. The affectionate father had deeply sympathized in the

trials of his child, and the brave spirit of Ormond never shrunk from the task of endeavouring to soothe a bereaved heart by administering the tenderest consolations which friendship could suggest.

In gratitude for such generous efforts, Thurles laboured to conceal his mental pangs, and assumed an outward calmness, so opposite to the real character of his feelings, that an ordinary observer might have been induced to credit the sincerity of his apparent peace. But a father's penetration is not easily duped. Lord Ormond, with secret anguish, saw through the filial fraud that was practised to elude the vigilance of parental love, and his wakeful eyes were ever fixed on his son, in the fond hope of discovering the symptoms of a real return to tranquillity.

It seemed fated that the object which the Earl had so much at heart, should still continue to evade his grasp ; for day succeeded day, and year followed year, without restoring to our suffering hero, even one of those delicious feelings which

had blest his early days. But though the light that had briefly glowed on "life's dull stream" no longer shone for him, still Thurles strove to confer the happiness he could not feel, and tried to be resigned, while, in directing all his actions to the study of promoting that felicity in others to which his own breast was a stranger, he derived the only gratification that earth had power to bestow.

An incident ultimately occurred which called forth this affecting heroism of conduct to its fullest extent. The event that we allude to, was the creation of a new patent authorized by the Queen, (41) and which was intended to restore the young Earl of Desmond to the honours of his illustrious race. By order of Elizabeth, her noble hostage had received a refined education, perfectly suitable to his distinguished birth; and when the titular, or, as he was ironically styled, the *suggan* Earl of Desmond, (42) supported by his alliance with Florence Mac Cartie, dared to aspire to the rank and estates of the unfortunate Gerald, whose fate has been given in our previous pages, the English ministers

advised the Queen to send the real representative of the house of Desmond into Munster, (43) persuaded that his presence would instantly draw off the clansmen of his race from following the fortunes of Fitz-Thomas, the usurper of its honours.

In compliance with this political suggestion, Lord James Fitzgerald was liberated from the Tower; and after the Sovereign had saluted the young Peer by his hereditary title, he instantly proceeded to the South of Ireland.

It was then that Lord Ormond's hopes for the restoration of his son's peace seemed to draw nearest to their accomplishment. With feelings of no common kind, the anxious father saw the placid smile, which, for the first time since his irreparable loss, played over the pale countenance of Thurles, as he rode beside the Earl of Desmond, when (accompanied by the Archbishop of Cashel) that descendant of a princely line entered the town of Kinsale; "where," to use the quaint but expressive language of the chronicler, "there was a mighty concourse of people, insomuch as

all the streets, doores, and windows, yea, the very gutters, and tops of the houses, were so filled with them, as if they came to see him, whom God had sent to bee that comfort and delight, their souls and hearts most desired, and they welcomed him with all the expressions and signs of joy ; every one throwing upon him wheat and salt, an ancient ceremony used in that province, upon the election of their new mayors and officers, as a prediction of future peace and plenty. That night the Earle was invited to supper to Sir George Thorneton's, who then kept his house in the town of Kilmallock ; and although the Earle had a guard of soldiers, which made a lane from his lodgings to Sir George Thorneton's house, yet the confluence of people that flockt thither to see him was so great, as in halfe an houre he could not make his passage through the crowd ; and after supper he had the like encounters at his returne."

The heart of our generous hero *did* exult at the memorable moment when the sole living relic of his departed love, the brother of his idolized

Geraldine, received these tokens of respect and affection, in passing through the territories of his ancestors as their acknowledged representative. But the dawn of such godlike emotions was soon overcast. On the succeeding day the Earl of Desmond's renunciation of the religion of his forefathers was evinced by his attendance on the divine service of the Protestant Church, in the belief of whose doctrines he had been educated, by direction of the Queen. To a sanguine people devoted to their national faith, this act appeared a flagrant apostacy ; it was resented as such by the same concourse who had hailed the return of their Chief with an enthusiastic zeal, that was suddenly diverted into a very different channel, by a proceeding which carried the natural expression of the passions to its highest point. Every voice was raised to condemn the son who abjured the faith his father died to defend ; and after a terrible explosion of popular indignation, the crowd dispersed and left their Chief to the neglect which they conceived that he deserved (44).

Ignorant of the language and the manners of his country, the Earl of Desmond could scarcely comprehend the meaning of the extraordinary scene he had just witnessed; and turning to Lord Thurles, he asked for an explanation of the recent tumult. It was briefly given. Surprise, mingled with a meek regret, appeared to be the predominant emotions which the Viscount's hurried elucidation created in Lord James Fitzgerald, who, having been educated in a strict retirement from active life, and all the stirring pursuits it leads man to embrace, was not particularly liable to those bold impulses, which, if there be truth in the doctrine of necessity, may perhaps derive their origin as much from the influence of circumstance, as from that of moral conformation.

Heroism had been as "a fountain sealed" to the young Chief; and years of seclusion had naturally led him to find his principal happiness in those intellectual occupations, which, in fact, had been the only courses that were left him to pursue.

Mild by nature, and unambitious from education, Lord James was better formed for those gentle services of the heart which charm the intercourse of private life, than for the daring and heroic deeds of war: nevertheless, having an imagination sufficiently fertile to embellish every subject, and sensibilities acute enough to sympathize with every fine emotion, the young Chief of Desmond could appreciate and understand the bright perfection of Thurles's character, which he regarded with a reverence amounting almost to devotion. This feeling matured into a real friendship. The dissimilarity which existed between Thurles and Lord James, with respect both to years and qualities, opposed no bar to the existence of a mutual affection.

The Viscount assiduously nurtured sentiments that were calculated to lighten the wretchedness to which he was doomed; and from the emanations of these kindly feelings sprung the most tender attachment between him and the adopted brother of his heart, in whom, he almost fancied, that a portion of the spirit of his Geraldine yet lived.

To cultivate this friendship soon became the dearest object of Lord Thurles. He felt as if a beautiful flower had suddenly arisen to blossom on the barren waste of life, and the springs of his heart flowed forth to nourish and support it.

Each passing mark of love was abundantly requited by the gentle youth on whom it was bestowed; and when blood at length ceased to deluge Ireland, and that the stoppage of war allowed Lord Thurles to shelter his griefs in the bosom of domestic life, he found no difficulty in inducing the brother of his lamented Geraldine to reside almost entirely beneath his roof (45). Misfortune, in blighting the prospects of Thurles, had not planted a cold and selfish apathy within his breast. The sources of sensibility, though embittered, were not all dried up; and every fond emotion, which our high-minded hero yet could feel, was willingly shared between Lord Ormond and the last scion of the noble race of Desmond. From directing the talents and virtues of his youthful charge into the channel which seemed

most likely to retain them in a happy course, Thurles drew exquisite comfort ; and in tenderly watching over his father's declining age, the inward sorrows of his soul found another sweet alleviation.

But there is a grief that does not die : and many were the hours in our hero's life, which were so fraught with the fulness of regret—so shaded with dark remembrance, that even the sympathies of friendship failed to succeed in assuaging their pain. At those moments, when memory keenly followed the sufferer, and oppressed him with the weight of real anguish, there was one resource which brought the strongest consolation to his mind—it was to wander to the grave of his lost Geraldine ! Beside that sacred spot of earth, just at the hour when she died, Thurles was wont to kneel, and banquet on that mysticism of the heart—the luxury of grief.

The soft sighs of the night breeze, as it whispered through the foliage of the towering trees that waved above the shrine of love, was the only

sound which stole upon the stillness that hallowed it; and when the moonbeams slumbered on the verdure of that solitary grave, they lengthened the shadow of the kneeling Thurles, and gave an unearthly semblance to his tall figure, which partly touched by light, and partly robed in darkness, looked like a guardian spirit of the dead watching their silent sleep.

To pour forth his sorrows over the grave of *her*, who was so loved by him in life—so lamented in death!—to pray on the earth which covered the remains of all that his heart held dearest, and to gaze long and sadly on an object fraught with associations of by-gone bliss and present grief, relieved the suffering mourner.

To think on the world of spirits drew out the sting from the bitterness of woe; for in longing to follow his beloved, who was already there, Thurles ventured to anticipate the glorious moment, which should finally unite his soul to Geraldine's, where heaven-born affection only finds a lasting bliss, in the unchangeableness of immortality.

Let not the holy love which prompted such a trust be derided as romance or stigmatized as folly by the worldling, who can neither feel nor comprehend it ; and in viewing the private distractions and public calamities which have been detailed in the preceding pages, let them be traced to their principal source : an unjust display of monarchical authority on the one hand, and, on the other, an intemperate resistance to the influences it produced.

Had a more enlarged toleration and enlightened policy protected the liberties of the people, (46) and restrained the prerogatives of the Crown within their proper limits, the leaders of those desperate councils which ruined the public peace, might have been reclaimed from the senseless career of waging war with a superior force ; many differences on speculative points might have merged into a desire to conciliate the English ascendancy as the only practicable mode of adjusting the perplexities of Ireland, and an illustrious family which had flourished for centuries, might not have been destroyed in the vortex of civil faction.

While the philanthropic mind admits these truths, it will gratefully remember, that many of the prohibitory statutes and obnoxious distinctions, which for ages produced such fearful results, have been repealed by the British legislature; and in doing so will confidently hope, that the era is at hand, when the interests of England being rightly understood to be identified with those of Ireland, all party-spirit and religious intolerance will cease to operate against the latter country.

That will be a glorious moment in the national existence of Ireland, when an atonement for the wrongs she has received shall be passed in the final abrogation of a prohibitive and monopolizing system, which, in restricting the liberty of the subject, debases his natural character, (47) and deprives him of incentives to honourable ambition.

Bright will be the page in the history of England, which shall record the annihilation of every jealousy and prejudice, that may still be found to dim the lustre of her annals.

Of the approach of such a period, the symptoms

of the times present a favourable augury (48). When that important crisis comes, may the dawn of better days compensate for the storms of the past! May Ireland fully demonstrate the solid advantages which result from constitutional freedom,—that firmest support to the frame of Government;—and may she secure her own happiness, and the peace of Great Britain, by diffusing that prosperity throughout the land, which the capabilities of her people, and the resources of her soil, are calculated to produce.

Then, bound with her sister to one King, and enjoying an equality of those political rights which seem due to *all* the subjects of the same crown, Ireland will attain her proper rank among the countries of the earth.



NOTES.

NOTES.

(1) “ *Howl of the Ulster death-cry.*”—p. 20.

IN former times each great Milesian clan had its peculiar *Caoinan*, or death-cry. General Vallancey thinks the custom may be traced to the remotest antiquity; and asserts that David's lamentation for Jonathan, and the *Conclamatio* over the Phœnician Dido, as described by Virgil, coincide with the *Caoinan*. Dr. Campbell is also of opinion that the word *Ululate*, or *Hullaloo*, the choral burden of the *Caoinan*, and the Greek word of the same import, have a strong affinity to each other.—The death-cry is still practised in remote parts of Ireland, but the habit is gradually falling into disuse.

(2) “ *Two of the ponies of the country.*”—p. 25.

These little animals were called *Hobbies*. Smith gives the following account of them in his History of Kerry.—“The little hobbies of the country are the properest horses to travel through it; and a man must abandon himself entirely to their guidance, which will answer much better than if one should strive to manage and direct their footsteps; for these creatures are a kind of automata, or machines, as Mr. Tournfort* has long since observed, which naturally follow the laws of mechanics, and will conduct themselves much better, on those occasions, than the most knowing persons can possibly direct them.”

(3) “ *He had hovered near the plain.*”—p. 52.

The authority quoted in the foregoing note, asserts, that at the time of the battle of Monaster-ni-va, the Earl of Desmond and the Lord Kerry, who about this time had joined the Chief, stood in an adjacent wood to see the fight: and about midnight sent congratulatory letters to the English camp.

* See his Voyage to the Levant.

(4) "*Overture had been rejected.*"—p. 53.

In speaking of the Earl of Desmond's letter of congratulation to Sir Nicholas Malby, Doctor Leland says, that it was considered a dissembling one, and was answered only by a severe expostulation, reminding the Earl of his engagements to the Queen, and exhorting him to return to his allegiance.

(5) "*They are these,*" &c.—p. 90.

The requisitions embodied in this speech, are exactly those which Doctor Leland states that the Lord Justice, Sir William Pelham, commissioned the Earl of Ormond to propose to the Desmond as the final demands of Government; but a slight liberty has been taken with the time of their delivery. According to history, they were made to the Earl of Desmond after he had attempted to surprise the English camp, in revenge for Malby's occupancy of Rathkeale. The interests of my narrative obliged me to represent those requisitions as being offered to the Chieftain prior to that event.

(6) "*They have said should we exert ourselves,*" &c.—p. 93.

These are the precise words which were used by the English ministers, in discussing the subject of Ireland's miseries. I think myself justified in the anachronism of having antedated their expression a very little time, particularly as the same detestable policy which dictated the avowal I have quoted, operated against Ireland long before its open declaration. The adduced passages were the terms adopted by Elizabeth's counsellors, when, immediately after the suppression of the Desmond faction, and the cessation of all public tumult, the affairs of Ireland came under the consideration of the English parliament. On an occasion which presented a most favourable opportunity for extending the privileges of the British constitution to that unfortunate country, in the introduction of those just and equal measures which were calculated to restore tranquillity to her distracted people, we find the English ministers advocating an atrocious system that promoted those disorders which might have been closed for ever, through the medium of a mild and impartial administration.

Mr. O'Driscoll, in his able history of Ireland, offers some remarks that are strikingly applicable to the foregoing subject. "Unquestionably," says that writer, "in the main, England has been the oppressor, and Ireland the victim,—not perhaps

always a guiltless victim,---and it may be, an offender; but even the guilt may have been nearly balanced by the weight of suffering that has always fallen on the weakest."---And again: "No misgovernment is ever so bad as provincial misgovernment,---And no provincial misgovernment, it would seem, as that of a free people. Whether arising from jealous reluctance to extend that proud distinction to a race of inferiors, or from that inherent love of absolute power, which gives all rulers a tendency to be despotic, and seeks, when restrained at home, for vent and indemnification abroad."

The voice of history proclaims that Ireland was grossly misgoverned for several ages subsequent to the invasion of Henry the Second. When alluding to the infamous decree which adjudged that it was "no felony to kill a mere Irishman in time of peace," Dr. Curry observes, that so ridiculously as well as tyrannously was this distinction kept up, "that no man was to be taken for an Englishman who had not his upper lip shaven, (which it seems the Irish had not); and if any man should be found among the English, contrary thereunto, it was lawful to seize him and his goods, as an Irish enemy."

The words marked with inverted commas, are quoted by Dr. Curry from the writings of Sir John Davis, who was Attorney-General in Ireland during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First. The remarks which are offered in another part of his "Historical Relations," are so acute and pertinent, that I shall not apologize for inserting them. Speaking of the

anxiety which was testified by the Irish nation to be admitted to the privileges of the British constitution, Sir John observes that "it was certainly a great defect in the civil policy of Ireland, that for the space of three hundred and fifty years, at least, after the conquest first attempted, the English laws were not communicated to its people, nor the benefit or protection thereof allowed them ; for as long as they were out of the protection of the laws, so as every Englishman might oppress, spoil, and kill them without controul, how was it possible they should be other than outlaws, and enemies to the crown of England ? If the King would not admit them to the condition of subjects, how could they learn to acknowledge, and obey him, as their Sovereign ? When they might not converse or commerce with civilized men, nor enter into any town or city without peril of their lives, whither should they fly but into woods and mountains, and there live in a wild and barbarous manner ? In a word, if the English would neither in peace govern them by the law, nor in war root them out by the sword, must they not needs be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, to the world's end ?"

The enlightened mind revolts from the inhuman rigour and injustice, which, during the reign of Elizabeth, was practised in Ireland against the members of the Roman Catholic church. If we are to trust the records of that period, many of the Popish priests were put to the most cruel death, for maintaining their religious tenets in the exercise of their clerical func-

tions ; for, to use the words of an able historian, “ to be a Catholic was thought to signify nothing else but an enemy to God ; and the name of Irishman, or Papist, was deemed a sufficient justification of any act of cruelty or injustice committed on the person who bore it.”

The persecutions of the period were not confined to the Irish priesthood. Elizabeth was so jealous of the influence which the bards exercised over the chieftains of Ireland, that she caused an act of Parliament to be passed against the Hibernian minstrels, and all those who entertained them.

Borlase asserts that, “ it was not till the thirteenth of James the First, Anno. 1614, that the Irish were *considered as subjects* ; for then an act was made in the Irish Parliament, declaring that *the natives of Irish blood* were in several statutes and records called *Irish enemies*, and, accordingly, abridged of the benefit of the laws ; but that being then taken into his Majesty’s gracious protection under one law, as dutiful subjects, those laws of distinction and difference were wholly abrogated.”

(7) “ *If it goes on, exclaimed the generous Princess.*”—p. 93.

These are the actual words which history attributes to Elizabeth, when the wars of Ireland formed the subject of her Majesty’s contemplation.

(8) “ *Grant this, and peace shall reign,*” &c.—p. 105.

Doctor Leland says, that the Earl of Desmond's answer to the requisitions proposed from Government, through the agency of Lord Ormond, “ consisted only of complaints of injuries sustained, with some menaces of involving the whole kingdom in confusion, if redress should be denied. He was, therefore,” adds the historian, “ by proclamation, declared a traitor, if within twenty days he should not submit.”

(9) “ *A proclamation that denounced the Desmond as a traitor.*”—p. 108.

Dr. Leland asserts, that the bills proposed for the attainder of the Earl of Desmond, were not received without difficulty and opposition.

In Dr. Curry's “ Historical and Critical Review of the Civil Wars in Ireland,” I find the following observation on the above mentioned topic :—“ The Earl of Desmond's vast estate in the province of Munster, was a strong temptation to the Chief Governor of Ireland to make, or proclaim him a rebel, their prey being insured to them in either case, by this forfeiture ; and, indeed, it doth not appear that this Earl, before he was

proclaimed, had committed any overt act of treason, unless his private family quarrels with the Earl of Ormond, about their respective powers and limits, could be deemed such.”—And a little further on the same historian says, in speaking of the Desmond’s loyalty : “ Nor can I find that anything but mere suspicion was then alleged against him, and *that* only because he refused, or delayed, to draw out his forces against his brother, John of Desmond, who appeared in arms against the Queen.”

(10) “ *A few of the particular incidents.*”—p. 110.

The subsequent details of the events here alluded to, are strictly historical.

(11) “ *The Castle of Carrick-a-foyle was next besieged.*”

—p. 111.

The following statement is given in “*Pacata Hibernia*,” as illustrative of the state of Irish affairs at the period of Sir Charles Wilmot’s siege of Carrick-a-foyle.

“ The Lord Fitz-Maurice, whose name was Patricke, and father to Thomas Lord Fitz-Maurice now living, an obstinate rebell, hearing of our being at Carigfoyle, fearing our neighbourhood, brake his Castle of the Beaulieu, seated upon the

Shenan, two miles distant from Carrigfoyle ; when hee saw his chiefe house possessed by our forces, tooke such an inward griefe, as the twelfth of this instant hee gaue up the ghost. The countie of Kerry, at this time, was the best inhabited countrye of all Munster ; but *whosoever tooke the most paines in sowing, certaine it is, that the garrisons, as they were shortly after placed, reaped all the profite of that harvest.*

“The Iland of Kerry, an ancient and chiefe house of the Earles of Desmond, and of late belonging to Sir William Herbert, as an Vndertaker, together with many other castles in those parts, are (by the rebels) absolutely ruined, neere upon the first bruit of the armies approach, which was an evident argument of their obstinacies.”—*Pacata Hibernia*, Vol. I. p. 130.

(12) “*In order to supplicate a pardon for the Desmond.*”—p. 121.

In recording this affecting incident, Mr. Smith says :—“The Countess of Desmond came to the camp to intercede for her unhappy Lord, about an hour after the proclamation was read ; but the forces had marched towards her husband’s country, which they entered with fire and sword.”—Dr. Leland, writing on the same subject, gives the following account :—“The Countess fell upon her knees before the Lord Deputy, and with tears petitioned (but in vain) that her husband should be received to mercy.”

- (13) "*A large reward and pension to any individual who should bring in his head.*"—p. 123.

Mr. Smith states, that a reward of one thousand pounds, with forty pounds a-year annual pension, was publicly offered to any person who should deliver the Earl of Desmond alive into the hands of Government; and that five hundred pounds, and twenty pounds a-year pension, was promised to him who should bring in the Chieftain's head.

- (14) "*He had listened to the dismal Keenan.*"—p. 130.

Keenan was the term for the Irish funeral song; which is thus described in the fourth volume of the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy.

"At the conclusion of the *Keenan*, the body was conveyed to the place of interment, attended by friends of the deceased and accompanied by women, who at certain intervals sang the *Gol* or *Ullaloo*.

"The relations and *Keeners* ranged themselves in two divisions, one at the head, and the other at the feet of the corpse."

(15) “ *Leaving the Irish masters of the field.*”—p. 151.

Doctor Leland concludes his short account of this victory, as follows :—“ Audley, Moore, Cosby, and Sir Peter Carew, all distinguished officers, were slain in this rash adventure. George Carew, the younger brother, was restrained from following his companions by his uncle Wingfield, master of the ordnance, and thus reserved for nobler service. Lord Grey, who had waited the event upon a neighbouring eminence, returned with the remains of his forces, to the seat of government, covered with confusion and dishonour.”

(16) “ *A sentence scarcely paralleled amongst the annals of barbarism.*”—p. 154.

All the historians who have written on this subject, authenticate the infamous butchery I have related ; but Spenser, who was Secretary to Lord Grey, denies that the latter pledged his oath for the security of the lives, liberties, and properties of the garrison of Smerwick ; and asserts, that no conditions were granted for its surrender.

O’Sullivan, Ma-Geoghegan, Curry, and other authors, however, contend that the articles of capitulation were those which

I have given ; and positively declare that their performance was guaranteed by the word and faith of the Lord Deputy.

Ma-Geoghegan says, that the unfortunate man who acted as interpreter met even with a more cruel fate than that of his former associates, his legs and arms being crushed with blows of mallets, until death ensued. The same author adds, that from all those barbarous transactions, arose the adage, *Fides Greia*, i. e., the faith of Grey ; which has passed into a common proverb in Ireland, whenever the inhabitants of that country speak of a remarkable perfidy.

It is but justice to add, that many historians concur in representing Elizabeth as grieved and displeased at this atrocious execution ; but, as Doctor Leland says, "such pretences and such professions could not efface the odiousness of this action."

(17) "*Having crossed the Shannon in a small boat.*"—p. 160.

Mr. Smith mentions this circumstance, and adds, that the English staying in the country too long, "The Knight of the Glin, with Sir John Desmond, attacked them with four hundred foot and thirty horse ; but the English, after a smart skirmish of eight hours, made good their retreat with little loss, having killed fifty of the Irish."

(18) “ *Was forced to escape, covered only by his shirt.*”—p. 160.

See Smith’s History of Kerry.

(19) “ *When flying past Kilmallock.*”—p. 160.

The occupation of Kilmallock by Elizabeth’s forces inflicted a tremendous blow on the fortunes of the Earl of Desmond, the former Lord of that great fortified town. In *Pacata Hibernia*, I find it stated, that four hundred and fifty foot and fifty horse were sent into Kilmallock; “for,” says the Chronicler, “it was well found, that the greatest hope of the arch-traitor Desmond did consist in Conniloe, which by reason of the fertility of the soile, the strength of the countrey, and the inhabitants being all his naturall borne followers, did yield him more command and relief than any part of the province besides: two garrisons, therefore, were placed at Askeiton and Kilmallock, that did so infest the rebels that resided in those parts, as before the next winter was ended, they were utterly wasted.”

(20) “ *As well as certain Agnus Dei.*”—p. 161.

See Holinshed.

(21) “ *To be devoured by ravens.*”---p. 161

This circumstance is recorded in the life of Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight, by Arthur Cayley, jun. Esq.

(22) “ *Was frightfully mangled by beasts of prey.*”---p. 164.

See Leland.

(23) “ *I would rather forsake God than my men.*”---p. 166.

These are the remarkable words that Mr. Smith gives as the actual answer which was returned by the Earl of Desmond to the Lords Justices Loftus and Wallop.

(24) “ *Whom History commemorates by the ennobling term of Geffredi Pietas.*”---p. 174.

See Hist. Cath.—O’Sullivan.

(25) "*It is the Benshee's cry.*"—p. 185.

Mr. Croker, in his excellent Fairy Legends, gives the following account of this object of national superstition :—"The word Benshee has been variously explained, as the head of the fairies and as the white fairy ; but Dr. O'Brien, in his Irish dictionary, writes, *Beansíghe*, plural ; *Mnàsíghe*, she-fairies or woman-fairies, credulously supposed, by the common people, to be so affected to certain families, that they are heard to sing mournful lamentations about their houses at night, whenever any of the family labours under a sickness which is to end in death. But, continues the Doctor, no families who are not of an ancient and noble stock are believed to be honoured with this fairy privilege ; pertinent to which notion, a very humorous quantum is set down in an Irish elegy on the death of one of the Knights of Kerry, importing, that when the fairy-woman of the family was heard to lament his death, at Dingle, a sea-port town, the property of those Knights, every one of the merchants was alarmed lest the mournful cry should be a fore-warning of his own death ; but the poet assures them, in a very humorous manner, that they may make themselves very easy on that occasion."

I shall follow the example of Mr. Croker, in alluding to the mention which one of our greatest authors has made concerning the Benshee ; that imaginary spirit, according to Sir Walter

Scott, "implies the female fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible, it is in the form of an old woman, with a blue mantle and streaming hair. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish."

Pursuing this subject, the same eminent writer discusses the credulity that induced a popular belief in supernatural warnings of approaching death. In doing this, he says:—"The most remarkable instance of the kind occurs in the MS. Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, so exemplary for her conjugal affection. Her husband, Sir Richard and she, chanced, during their abode in Ireland, to visit a friend, the head of a sept, who resided in his ancient baronial castle, surrounded with a moat. At midnight she was awakened by a ghastly and supernatural scream, and looking out of bed beheld, by the moonlight, a female face and part of the form hovering at the window. The distance from the ground, as well as the circumstance of the moat, excluded the possibility that what she beheld was of this world. The face was that of a young woman, and rather handsome but pale, and the hair, which was reddish, loose and dishevelled. The dress, which Lady Fanshawe's terror did not prevent her remarking accurately, was that of the ancient Irish. This apparition continued to exhibit itself for some time, and then vanished with two shrieks, similar to that which had first excited Lady Fanshawe's attention. In the morning, with

infinite terror, she communicated to her host what she had witnessed, and found him prepared not only to credit but to account for the apparition. ‘A near relation of my family,’ said he, ‘expired last night in this castle. We disguised our certain expectation of the event from you, lest it should throw a cloud over the cheerful reception which was your due. Now, before such an event happens in this family and castle, the female spectre whom you have seen is always visible. She is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank, whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonour done to his family, he caused to be drowned in the castle moat.’ ”

(26) “*And fired by me ! shouted the Chief.*”—p. 193.

In the event of being unable to hold out against the superior power of the English forces, it was the common practice of the Irish chiefs to burn their castles. In “*Pacata Hibernia*” I find the following corroboration of the prevalence of this custom : “The President being come to Carrigofoyle, advertisement was brought, that the rebels hastened to ruine their castles in Kerrie. Wherefore the nine and twentieth, hee sent Sir Charles Wilmot (a very valiant and understanding gentleman,) with the forces aforesaid into Clanmorris, who, without much difficultie, by reason of his sudden and unexpected comming, re-

covered the chiefe house of the Lord Fits-Maurice, called Lixnaw, being formerly by him *sapped and underset with props of timber, to the end, that whensoever any English forces should come into the country, that at an instant (fire being set unto them) the castle should bee ruined, which hee rather wished than that a garrison of souldiers should bee lodged in it.*---The Lord Barry also, according to Dr. Leland, “in the rage of indignation set fire to his house, rather than abandon it to the rapine of the Queen’s soldiers.”

- (27) “*The wood of Gleann-na-Ginki, where their harassed frames found comparative rest in the ancient house,*” &c. &c.—p. 195.

In alluding to this place of refuge, Ma-Geoghegan says :—
“Le Comte de Desmond se réfugea dans un vieux maison au milieu d’un bois nommé Gleann-na-Ginki, à quatre miles de Tralee, où il ne vivoit que du butin de la chasse de Gordon, ou Geffrey Mac Sweeny, qui lui étoit fort attaché.”

In the life of the Duke of Ormond it is mentioned, that the lonely house in which the Earl of Desmond concealed himself, was situated near the river Maine. In the old maps of Ireland by Gulielmus Petty, the river marked *Maine* is the same as that at present known by the name of *Mang*. In “*Pacata Hibernia*” there is a curious map of Castell Mang, and the

river over which the edifice was erected upon arches, like those of a bridge, that were thrown across the water.

(28) “ *Were obliged to stand up to their necks in a river.*”—
p. 198.

This incident is narrated by Mr. Smith, as having actually occurred to the once great Earl of Desmond and his unhappy Countess. For obvious reasons, I have substituted the daughter of the Desmond in place of his lady.

(29) “ *The Kerne met and secured a small stock of cattle.*”—
p. 203.

The anecdote introduced by these words is historical.

(30) “ *Spare her! I am Earl of Desmond.*”—p. 206.

The substitution of the syllable *her* for that of *me*, is the only alteration I have made in the last words which were spoken by the dying Lord of Desmond; nor has the brutality of his miscreant destroyer been in the slightest degree exaggerated.

(31) “ *Instantly severed the head from the body.*”—p. 207.

O’Sullivan, in his Catholic History, concludes his account of the death of the Earl of Desmond with these words:—
 “ *In rei memoriam locus qui tunc ejus sanguine fuit perfusus, ad huc sanguineo colore fertur est affectus.*”

A tradition of the same nature, as the fanciful one I have just mentioned, exists in Scotland, respecting the chamber in Holyrood House, where Rizzio was murdered. It has been asserted, that the spot on which the favourite of Mary fell continues stained with his blood; and that the deed of death is thus perpetuated through a medium similar to that which O’Sullivan affirms remained in his time to memorize the act that terminated Desmond’s life.

(32) “ *Gave a finishing stroke to the cause he had espoused.*”
 —p. 217.

Here it may not be uninteresting to give the following extract, which contains an account of the number of the Irish and English forces that were to be found in Desmond in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth. I have copied the statement from a MS. in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, which

was written by order of the maiden Queen. Judging from the manner in which the Earl of Desmond is mentioned, I conclude that the curious document in question was drawn out some time previous to the rebellion which was headed by that unfortunate noble. The MS. fell into the possession of Archbishop Usher, and was left by him to the Dublin University. The orthography is after the original memorial.

IRISH FORCES IN DESMOND.

THE LEADERS.	Horse.	Gallow- Glasses.	Kerne.
McCarty More, Prince of his Country .	40	160	2000
McCarty Reagh, Lord of Carbry .	60	80	200
Donogh-og-McCarty, L. of Ophaly .	24	80	200
Teg McCormock, L. of Musgray .	40	80	200
Ormond, L. of his Country .	12	0	100
O'Kouley, L. of his Country .	80	0	60
O'Donoghane, L. of his Country .	6	0	60
O'Driscoll, L. of Carlough and Baltismore	6	0	200
O'Mahon, L. of Onheraugh .	26	0	120
O'Sullivan, L. of Henigberg and Baurry	16	0	200
O'Donoghmore, L. of Loughlin .	12	0	200
O'Donoughglan Sligh .	6	0	60
McGilly Hoddy .	12	0	200
O'Connor Kerry .	24	0	120

THE LEADERS.	Horse.	Gallow- Glasses.	Kerne.
A Septe of Birnes of Cavigrul . . .	20	0	60
Another of that Septe in Harlah . . .	8	0	24
Another in the Combraghs . . .	6	0	24
Sum total of forces (6372 men) . . .	304	400	5668

ENGLISH FORCES IN THAT COUNTRYE.

	Horse.	Gal.Gl.	Kerne.
Earle of Desmond and his friends are so invirowed with Irish that he can give no <i>eayde</i> (aid) to the Gouvernment, and is always at war wt his kinsmen, but can make and bringe up beside a battle of shot and cross-bowes	400	640	3000
Burkes in Clanwilliam invirowed wt Irish	24	80	200
Butlers in Tipperary, but the one division cannot helpe	80	160	200
Sum total of forces, 4784 men.			

(33) "*Was buried in the small chapel of Killanamana.*"---p. 220.

See Smith's Histories of Cork and Kerry.

(34) “ *The just government and protection which were promised unto them for the time to come.*”—p. 225.

The contemptuous neglect which the English ministry testified to the remonstrances and petitions of the Irish people, for the removal of the political disabilities under which they laboured during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, fomented that desperate spirit of insurrection, which ultimately vented itself, first, in the tremendous conspiracy of the gunpowder-plot, and afterwards in the Rebellion of 1641, and the Civil War of 1688. The severities which, in a great measure, goaded the Irish Roman Catholics into the guilt of those transactions—the infringement of the articles of Limerick, and the completion of the penal code under Queen Anne—prove how nugatory was the promise of that “just government and protection,” for the performance of which the public faith and honour of England were solemnly pledged.

Lord Plunkett, in his speech on the Catholic question, in the House of Lords, on the 10th of June, 1828, made the following enlightened observations, with respect to the spirit of liberal inquiry which ought to influence a consideration of the proceedings of the Irish people:—

“When,” said his Lordship, “we come to sit in judgment upon the conduct of the natives of Ireland, we should do it not with feelings of repugnance or resentment against them; but of

shame, remorse, and self-accusation against ourselves. These are the assessors which we ought to call in to aid us in arriving at a decision, and in passing a just sentence of atonement."

These sensible remarks, though offered in relation to the inhabitants of modern Ireland, are equally applicable to the history of her ancient people.

(35) "*In the person of Sir John Perrot.*"—p. 225.

This gentleman was supposed to be the natural son of Henry the Eighth. The history of the times I would illustrate, was materially influenced by Perrot's able management of a country which, to use the words of his biographer, "had byn longe infested with warres, bloodshed, sedition, and civill contention; soe that for the space of sixtie yeres or upwardes, seldom had there byn any continuance of concord and perfecte peace thorow all the partes of that Island, but that either thorow the corruption or ignorance of the governors, the contention of the Lords, and men of accompt amongst thomselves, or the disobedience of the people and theyr principal leaders, agaynst the prince and magistrate, the sword was more in use amongst them than the lawes, and revenge was more practised than peace. The corruption of the governors, either by *covetousness* or *partialitie*, had divers times occasioned greate tumultes and troubles in that land, but never more than in the former and last

warres of Ireland, which did grow partely by the avarice, instigation, and procurement of some late governors, whose names shall be silenced."

This representation seems to have been a true picture of the state of Ireland at the period when Sir John Perrot was appointed to the office of Lord Deputy. On receiving the sword of Government, he laboured to restore pacification among the Irish, and nobly endeavoured to repair the havoc which centuries of misrule had inflicted on the country. Such manly independence of conduct soon secured to this equitable Viceroy the confidence and gratitude of a people, who, according to the authority I have already quoted, "Love to be justly dealt withall by theyr governors, however they deale with one another, and will doe more at the command of theyr governors, whom they *repute* and *have found to be juste*, than by the strict execution of the lawes, and *constraynt of any force or power*."

(36) "*Was deprived of her zealous friend and kindest governor*."---p. 227.

This fatal step not only retarded the progress of peace and civilization in Ireland, but threw that unhappy country once more under the dominion of domestic despots. In recording the moral and political improvement which the government of Perrot introduced among the Irish, and in narrating the malice of a herd of enemies, who attempted to arraign the conduct of that excel-

lent minister, the writer of his life remarks, that “such secret informations were still prosecuted agaynst hym, that from thenceforward the Lord Deputie found much opposition in all his actions of accompt: and the more quiet the countrie grew by his industrie and indevors, the more incensments were wrought agaynst him: private grudge prevayling, where open hostilities could do hym noe harm.”

It is refreshing to turn from this dark view of human nature, to one which represents it in a brighter aspect. In speaking of the love and gratitude which the Irish unanimously evinced on the departure of Sir John Perrot, his Chronicler observes, that “the people did strive and covet as he went thorow the streetes, if they could not take hym by the hand, yea to touch his garment, all praying for hym, and for his long life. And when he asked them why they did soe, they answered that they never had enjoyed theyr owne with peace before his time, and did doubt they should never do soe agayn when he was gone.”

(37) “*Kelly was hanged at Tyburn.*”—p. 228.

See Smith’s History of Kerry.

(38) “*On the attainder of the great Earl of Desmond.*”
—p. 228.

A respectable historian, when speaking of the forfeiture of the Desmond’s property, uses these words:—“When this Earl was

attainted, September the 25th, 1582, he was possessed of a prodigious estate in the Counties of Kerry, Cork, Waterford, and Limerick ; his lands extending one hundred and fifty miles, and containing 574,628 acres of English measure, on which were many strong castles. He was Lord of the regalities of the County Palatine of Kerry, Lord of Imokilly in this county, &c. He had a great number of vassals, and of his kindred and surname, above five hundred gentlemen ; raised *coin and livery, shragh*, &c. upon his tenants, through all the County of Limerick. He had all wrecks of the sea through all the ports and creeks of the County of Kerry ; and 13*s.* 4*d.* out of every fishing-boat in the port of Ventry and Ferriter's Island. It was asserted that he was able to raise, at a call, six hundred horse and two thousand foot, all of which possessions were utterly forfeited, and by Act of Parliament vested in the Queen and her heirs."

The territories of the Earl of Desmond's confederates were lavishly assigned to the British settlers ; but the White Knight, and a few others of the ancient proprietors, had part of their lands restored to them on receiving the Royal pardon.

Cox, in making a calculation from the Lambeth MSS., computes that thirty seigniories were granted to as many adventurers ; which landed property amounted to 208,089 acres.

Mr. O'Driscoll, in speaking of the enormous confiscations which were made in Ireland while Elizabeth swayed the English sceptre, uses these words :—

“It was in this reign, however, and under the Queen’s direct authority, that the fatal scheme of repressing what was called rebellion by forfeiture, or rather of breaking the power of the great Chiefs by the most sweeping confiscation of their domains, was first adopted, and carried into rigorous execution. Up to this time, those reguli had been treated somewhat on the footing of sovereign princes,—vassal sovereigns, indeed, and owing fealty and homage to the English monarch, but entitled within their own territories to most of the prerogatives of royalty. Between them and the English governors of the Pale there had indeed been frequent hostilities and inroads, and reprisals, with various fortune, and on various pretexts; but these had always been followed by pacifications which left the territories substantially unchanged, and seldom went even so far as to transfer the Clannish sceptre to some more submissive member of the ancient family.”

(39) “*Sir Walter Raleigh and others of the Queen’s favourites obtained immense estates.*”—p. 229.

Forty thousand acres in the County of Cork were bestowed on Sir Walter Raleigh, as a reward for his exploits in Ireland; and enormous grants of land were assigned to the English undertakers when the Desmond palatinate was dismembered.

The celebrated Edmund Spenser obtained an estate from Elizabeth of three thousand and twenty-eight acres in the County of Cork, out of the forfeited property of the Earl of Desmond, and lived for years at Kilcolman Castle, one of the ancient residences of that ill-fated nobleman. There, the great author of the *Fairy Queen* wrote a splendid poem that will last while English literature endures, and which has immortalized the dignified stanza in which it is composed. I have traversed the classic ground that Spenser trod—the spot is consecrated to every lover of genius by the associations it recalls. The Ballyhowra mountain and the adjacent lands are now stripped of the forests with which they were wooded in Elizabeth's time ; but the view from Kilcolman is fine and extensive. It is impossible to survey the scene without the deepest interest, for the mind is naturally filled with the excitement that historic remembrances are calculated to impart : a spell, cast by the spirit of poetry and the genius of chivalry, seems to enchain the soul while it dwells on the recollections of the romantic epoch when Spenser and Raleigh lived ; and memory loves to linger on the scene where, beside the river Mulla, those congenial spirits held communion. Spenser has celebrated the Mulla as being the stream on the banks of which he recited his glorious verses to the ear of Raleigh, and received the honourable testimony of a brother-poet's praise.

(40) “*The Ulster War.*”—p. 229.

In a MS. now in Trinity College, Dublin, which was drawn up during the administration of Sir William Fitzwilliams, by Captain Thomas Lee, 1594, Anno Regni Reginæ 37, and was addressed to Queen Elizabeth as “a brief declaration of the Government of Ireland; opening many corruptions of the same; discovering the discontents of the Irishry, and the causes moving those expected troubles,” &c. the writer says:—
“And now, most gracious Sovereign, for that (as I have heard) it hath been credibly reported to your Majesty, that the last Desmond’s wars did cost but forty thousand pounds, thereby the rather to induce your Highness to make wars upon the North, I have thought it my duty (under your Majesty’s protection) to set down the truth thereof, whereby it may the more easily be judged, what the charge of these expected Northern troubles may stand your Highness in, by comparing the said Desmond’s wars and those together. The charge of those wars to your Majesty was high, notwithstanding the great supplies then had of your subjects, and the great succour and assistance of sundry castles and good towns, which held firm and faithful to your Majesty, to receive and aid your soldiers upon all extremes; which towns and castles stood in most commodious places, not only to annoy, but utterly, in a manner, to overthrow the traitor, and all his co-partners. And where it cost your Majesty then *one* pound, it

cost your subjects *three*, during all the time of those wars which charge of your subjects I can well make out ; for the chief lord of one small village, who had but eight pounds yearly rent for the same village, paid for one year's cess to your Highness's soldiers thirty-eight pounds sterling, whereof I was also an eye-witness. These wars, I say, did stand your Majesty in four thousand pounds at the least, for the monthly charge was seven thousand, besides the victualling by sea."

After stating this, the memorialist adds: "The cause of those Desmond's wars was even like to this in the North, *through the great mistaking of the Desmond's* adversaries ; and that it cost your Majesty no less than I do here set down, Sir Henry Wallopp can well testify."

(41) "*The creation of a new patent authorized by the Queen.*"
—p. 232.

When this patent was going to be conferred, her Majesty addressed a letter to the Lord President to announce the royal pleasure, "to send over James Fitzgerald into Mounster;" in doing which the following words are used:—"Whereas wee know the keeping of him (the Earl of Desmond) in any state of a Prisoner, would wholly overthrow the worke, and multiply the jealousies of those who judge all others by themselves ; so in respect that you are in place where all circumstances

are clearest known, and that the change of causes altereth counsels; know this from us, That we shall never disallow it, if you in your discretion finde it necessarie (at any time) that you doe abridge him of any libertie, or any favour now afforded him." A little further on the cautious Princess adds:—"And now because wee know the countrey will think James Fitzgerald unlikely to stead them that shall follow him, if they bee not assured that hee shall have the Title, (which is a matter they doe so much affect to follow,) wee have herewith sent you a patent of his Earldome, to the intent that you may assure all that are diffident of our performance; and yet wee can be content, they plainly doe understand also, that if they shall not actually and substantially performe those services, which may deserve this extraordinarie clemencie, and give us cause to consummate the rest: wee both can and will quickly recall all that is hitherto performed."

(42) "*The Suggan Earl of Desmond.*"—p. 232.

This derisive title signified the *Earl of Straw*: It originated when the Lord of Tyrone, as Smith asserts, "took upon him to create James (the son of Thomas Fitzgerald, who was the eldest son of James, the Fifteenth Earl, by his first wife) Earl of Desmond, who went afterwards by the name of the *Suggan Earl.*" *Fitz* is a patronymick of Norman derivation. The aforementioned James was styled Fitz-Thomas, in order to express the name of his father.

(43) “ *Ministers advised the Queen to send the real representative of the house of Desmond into Munster.*”---p. 233.

A curious experiment, that is illustrative of the policy of the times in which it occurred, was practised before Lord James Fitzgerald was permitted to return to his native land. ---“The President,” says the Chronicler, “knowing that those parts were always affectionately addicted to the Earles of Desmond, caused a footman of the young Earle’s, (who was shortly afterwards to come into Ireland,) as the manner is, having his master’s arms upon his coate, before and behinde, to shew himselfe in most places of the countrey, that thereby they might bee the better perswaded of his comming, and bee a meanes to alienate their hearts from the counterfeit Desmond.”

(44) “ *And left their Chief to the neglect which they conceived he deserved.*”---p. 235.

In narrating the treatment which the heir of the illustrious house of Desmond experienced in consequence of his renunciation of the national faith of Ireland, the Chronicler I have already quoted, remarks:---“From thence forward none of his father’s followers (except some few of the meaner sort of freeholders) resorted unto him; and the other great Lords in Munster, who had evermore beene overshadowed by the greatness of

Desmond, did rather feare than wish the advancement of the young Lord. But the trueth is, his religion, being a Protestant, was the onely cause that had bred this coynesse in them all; for if hee had been a Romish Catholike, the hearts and knees of all degrees in the province, would have bowed unto him. Besides, his comming was not well liked by the vndertakers, who were in some jealousie, that in after times he might be restored to his father's inheritances, and thereby become their Lord, and their rents (now payed to the Crowne) would in time be conferred on him."

In speaking of the usage that the young Earl of Desmond experienced from the Irish on the occasion to which this note alludes, Dr. Curry sensibly observes that the whole proceeding "furnishes no ill proof of the mistaken policy of the then Government of Ireland, which consisted in proselyting by force or seduction, to the established religion, the heirs of the principal Irish families, with a view of drawing their followers and dependents after them."

(45) "*Found no difficulty in inducing the brother of his lamented Geraldine to reside almost entirely beneath his roof.*"---p. 238.

A relation of the following circumstance will prove, that I have not violated historic truth in the character I have assigned to Lord James Fitzgerald.---In "*Pacata Hibernia*," it is asserted,

that "the young Earle of Desmond, having beene tenderly brought up in England, and not well agreeing with the manner and customes of Ireland, and also seeing how much he was deceived in his hopes, supposing that all his father's followers would have relied upon him, and obeyed his directions; whereof finding little or no appearance, desired the Lord President to give him leave to goe into England, whereunto (for reasons aforementioned) the President easily assented; for in all the time of his being in Ireland, no one rebell did for his sake submit himselfe to her Majestie, Thomas Oge of Kerry onely excepted."

The Queen, in her letter to the Lord President, speaks of the young Earl of Desmond's "good nature and disposition to gratefulnesse."

The letters patent for the restoration of that Noble to his family title, were never actually delivered to him by the President, who had received orders from Elizabeth not to bestow the restitution of the Desmond's Earldom, "except his services, or services done for his sake, should merit the same."

Lord James Fitzgerald died some time after his return to the Court of England, thus seeming to exemplify the unfortunate fatality which appeared to attend his illustrious race.

(46) "*Had a more enlarged toleration and enlightened policy protected the liberties of the people.*"—p. 241.

There is a passage in one of Lord Verulam's letters to

Secretary Cecil, which in a striking manner illustrates the absurd futility of attempting to convert a people to a new creed, by persecuting the religion in which they believe. The passage I allude to runs as follows:—"All divines," says Lord Verulam, "do agree, that if conscience be to be enforced, (wherein they differ) yet two things must precede its enforcement: the one, means of information, the other, time of operation; neither of which they (the Irish) have yet had. And there is no doubt, but to wrestle with them is directly opposite to their reclaim, and cannot but continue their alienation from the government; and therefore a toleration of religion, for a time not definite, seems to me to be a matter *warrantable by religion and in policy of absolute necessity*; and the hesitation of this, I think, hath been a great casting back of affairs in Ireland."

Six hundred and fifty-four years have elapsed since Henry the Second invaded Ireland. During the long period of six centuries and a half, political error, though modified in its operations, has still continued to influence the government of that country, and has presented a fruitful source of the public disorders, which have produced such ruinous consequences to the national peace of Great Britain. History and experience have proved, that the principle of the legislative system which hitherto has been acted upon in Ireland, is so impolitic and inefficacious, that it has often increased the evils it professed a desire to remove.

That able and impartial writer Mr. Young, in speaking on the foregoing subject, says :—" We have seen that this conduct has not converted the people to the religion of government ; and instead of adding to the internal security of the realm, it has endangered it ; if therefore it does not add to the national prosperity, for what purpose, but that of tyranny, could it have been embraced and persisted in? Mistaken ideas of private interest account for the actions of individuals ; but what could have influenced the British Government to permit a system, which must inevitably prevent the island from ever becoming of the importance which nature intended ?"—*Tour in Ireland*, vol. ii. pp. 48, 49.

(47) "*Which, in restricting the liberty of the subject, debases his natural character.*"—p. 242.

In support of this assertion, I shall adduce an authority which *I* may be forgiven for considering as indisputable. When speaking of the oppression to which the people of Ireland have been exposed for centuries, my lamented father makes the following enlightened, comprehensive, and judicious remarks :—"The relation between cause and effect is probably as steady and uniform in the moral and political as in the natural world. If the human mind be, as we suppose it, ultimately similar in every variety of our species, the same causes, to the operation of

which it is exposed, must, in similar situations, be universally followed by similar consequences. The great difficulty in all such inquiries is, to trace the operation of the several collateral circumstances, which modify the impression of the generally operating cause.

“Conformably to this leading principle, it will be found, that considerable and continued oppression has uniformly degraded the character of any unfortunate people over whom it has been exerted. In the instance before us, many of the leading traits in the character of the lower Irish may be easily traced to this original. ‘Extortion and oppression,’ as Sir John Davies says, ‘hath been the true cause of the idleness of this Irish nation.’ Oppression is universally the parent of idleness, especially when accompanied by exaction and rapacity; both have existed to an enormous degree among us, and both, though considerably diminished, still exist.”—*Crumpe’s Essay on the best Means of providing Employment for the People*.—p. 205.

(48) “*Bright will be the page in the history of England, which shall record the annihilation of every jealousy and prejudice, that may still be found to dim the lustre of her annals. Of the approach of such a period, the symptoms of the times present a favourable augury.*”—p. 243.

Since the foregoing paragraph went to press, the Roman

Catholic Relief Bill has passed through both Houses of Parliament, and has finally received the Royal Assent.

To the wisdom and patriotism of the Sovereign—to the skill and firmness of the Premier—and to the proceedings of his ministerial coadjutors, Great Britain is indebted for an act of legislation, which is calculated to ensure tranquillity and happiness to Ireland.

The population of that country are relieved from the burden of civil disabilities, and restored to the rights of civil freedom.

The cause of political justice has triumphed; and the victory has been achieved by a statesman and hero, whose conduct in the cabinet and the field presents the truest estimate of his illustrious character.

In the grand struggle of public opinion lately shown in this realm, and which constitutes a remarkable epoch in its history, the Duke of Wellington surmounted perils and difficulties, which, to a less energetic mind than his, would have seemed insuperable.

In standing forth as the bold maintainer of the interests of his native land, his Grace performed a noble deed, unparalleled even in the glorious records of *his* career, and the remembrance of which can only perish with the world where it was exhibited.

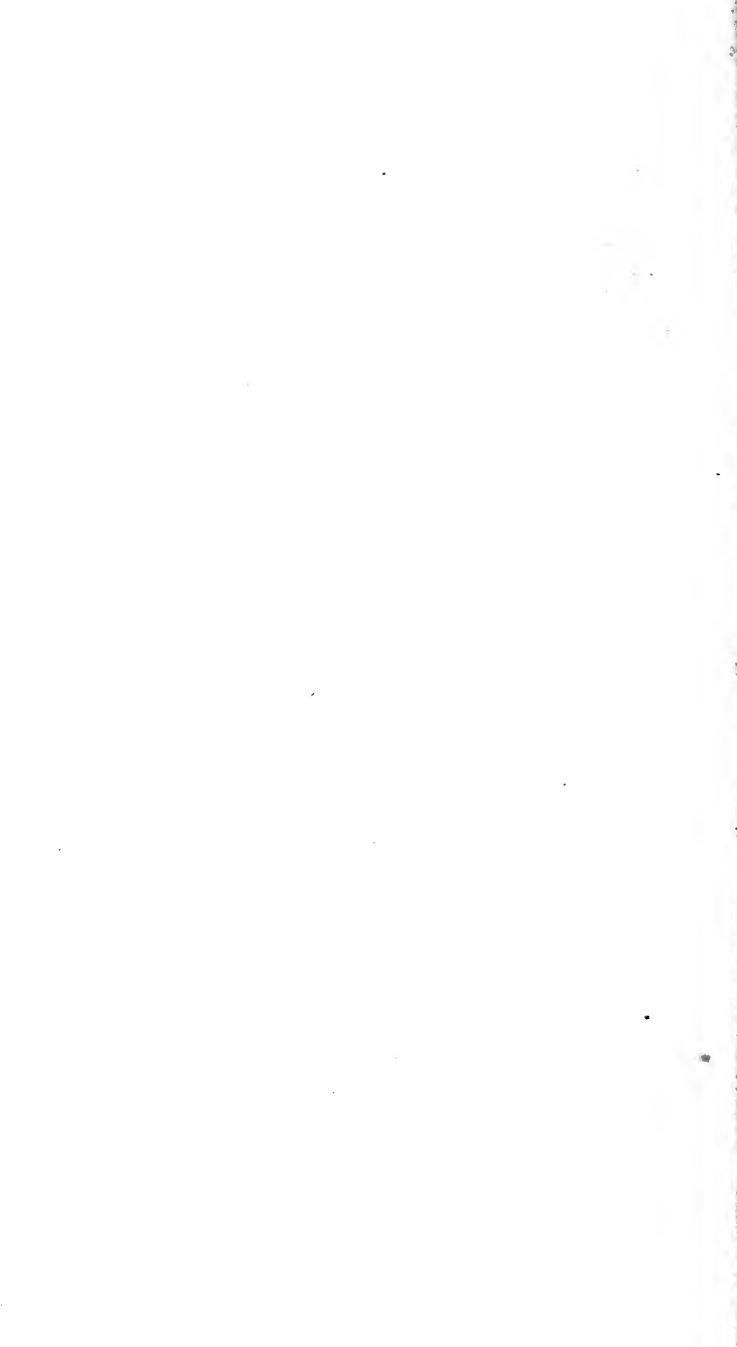
May the results of Catholic emancipation—that important measure sanctioned by the King, and (with one exception) supported by all the Princes of the House of Brunswick—be

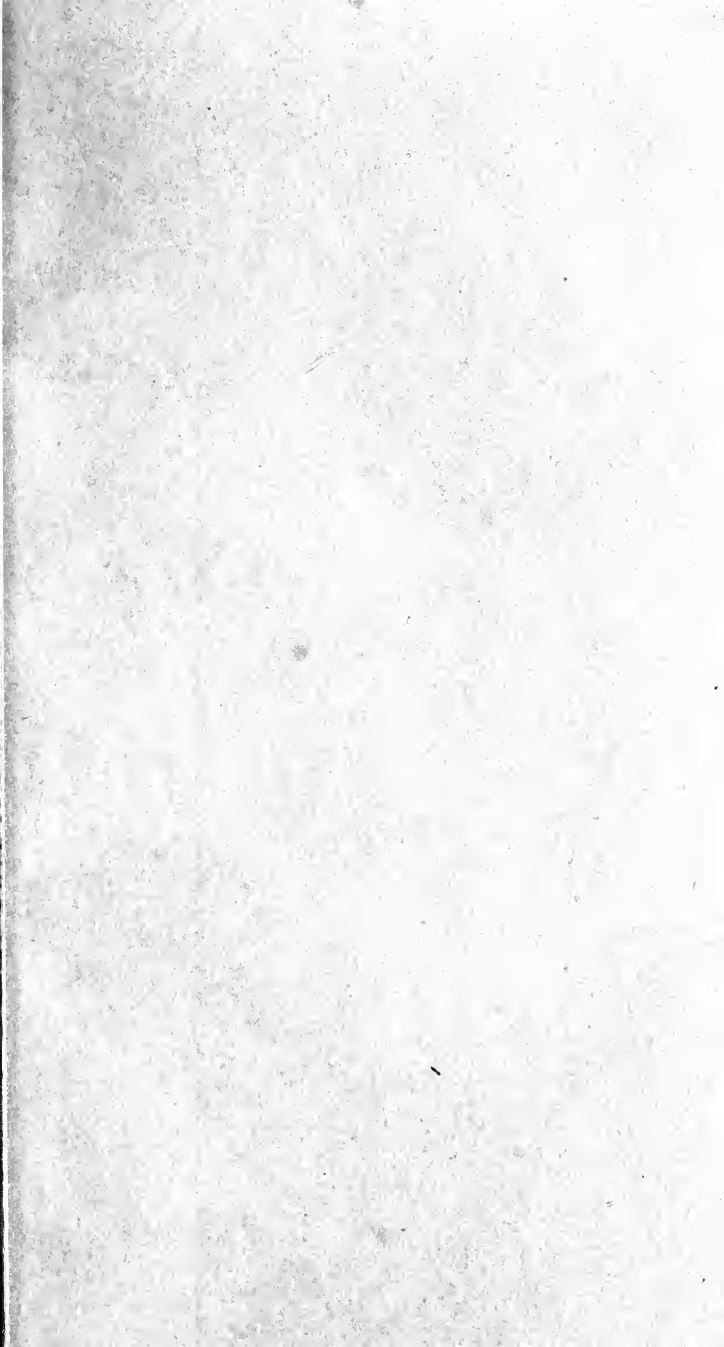
evidenced in the prosperity of the empire at large, and in the establishment of those sentiments of loyalty, affection, and confidence, which form the strongest bond of union between the Crown and the people.

THE END.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.









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